

Expectations Create Your Subjective Reality

The mind can play tricks. Your expectations can alter the way you experience reality.

Years ago I experienced this effect and have never forgotten the lesson it taught me.

In the pet store where I worked, my boss had placed a solid air freshener in the hallway. We were always doing this to fight the smells that some customers find objectionable, even in a clean pet shop.

As I walked by the new air freshener I picked it up to smell it. The waxy material inside was a nice creamy off-white color. I lifted it to my nose and took a whiff and smelled the most delicious vanilla scent. Then I looked at the label. It said “unscented”. No, it *couldn't* be. I *smelled* vanilla. I was positive.

I sniffed it again, but this time the vanilla scent wasn't there. There was no detectable scent at all. The vanilla had been all in my mind, just because the color had made me expect to smell vanilla- or, that's my theory.

This experience has made me question how I experience reality. If I expect something, I often question whether my expectation is coloring what I experience- I try to recognize my expectations and guard against them. I know it's probably not possible to completely rid myself of expectations and false experience, but I do believe I'm better at it than I was before I was punched in the face with that wake-up call.

So, when people expect government to be a credible source, I *understand* why they experience it as one. Even though the scent of credibility is all in their imagination. That's the only place where political “authority” resides.