



Fakers and Teachers, by Vernon Howard

How can you tell whether a certain advisor or book is truly accurate? What if the teacher or book is just as confused as you, while cleverly concealing it? What will you do? There is a way out of this problem, which we can illustrate. Suppose you are an expert at something, perhaps the gem business. You know all about the cutting and polishing of diamonds, rubies, emeralds. One day you meet a man who also claims

to be a gem expert. That man needs to talk for only a few minutes before you know the truth about him. How do you know? Because you are

an expert. His words either match or fail to match what you internally know to be true. But suppose you knew nothing about gems? There would

be no way to judge the man's honesty. If he is a charlatan, he might persuade you with clever words and a confident manner, but in that case you have consented to the deception, for nothing within you backs up his claim. Where does this leave the sincere seeker? With no problem at all. He must resolutely accept nothing from another that he, in his essential nature, does not accept as true. He must not accept another man's truth; it must be his very own. He already has at least a grain of truth within himself which can be nourished with honest intentions. So little by little he will be able to separate the fakers from the true teachers. This mental clearness is reached by placing desire for Truth before the desire to lean upon another.

--Vernon Howard