



What Can You Trust?, by Doug Powers

In young people's minds right now, the main issue is what they can trust in their own experience.

In the 50s and 60s, we trusted ideologies, religions, universities, and economists. There were many levels of expertise in different realms. Individuals trusted that they had goodwill and were trying to do the best they could to understand the very complex mechanisms of modern society and culture.

Now that faith in those people has completely collapsed, they didn't know where to look. In the 60s and 70s, when we were rebelling against authority, we still had an authority we were rebelling against, so there was still an identity; we were half an identity and half a rebellion. There was still the structure of something. Now, however, there's no place to look where you can trust the authority or the structure. Intentions are no longer clear. We no longer simply believe that people have goodwill- they might have goodwill, but they'll probably have other intentions too.

So, the biggest problem is where to look. Now, that starts with a question of authority, but then, it worked into a question of even with each other - in relationships, can we trust each other? And then, we almost got to a place where we don't even trust ourselves. So now, we've worked our way to a point where the only thing we can trust is our own immediate emotion in the moment. I'm not even sure we can trust that, because it seems very unstable. So, the fundamental issue is: where do we look as a sort of ground to examine and determine the thoughts and actions that we're going to take, to determine on what basis of criteria we are going to use to evaluate our thoughts, actions, and lives that we're confident in.