

# Power of images

## Cobra! Cobra!

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### Intent of this story

- ✓ *Be critical. Verify things by yourself*
- ✓ *Don't act on firsts impressions.*

## STORY

Once upon a time a group of Students went for a picnic.

They took along with them the most delicious food.

At lunch time, they opened their bags, spread their mats and sat down for their meal.

Then, all of a sudden, some one discovered a cobra coiled on a rock near by.

In a fright he shouted: "Cobra!", "Cobra! Terrified, all run for life. Their delicious food was trampled upon, scattered and spoiled.

A few courageous students picked stones and sticks to kill the cobra.

To their surprise, they found that it wasn't a cobra!

It was a thick, brown coiled rope lying on a rock!

It looked like a cobra, but it wasn't. Yet, all the same, their food was scattered and their picnic spoiled!

## Reflections about Perception and its Consequences

### What Perception is and what it does to us.

1. Whatever we see, whatever we hear, whatever we touch, whatever we smell, whatever we taste; in other words, whatever we grasp with our senses builds up our perception.
2. If I see a cobra when actually there is a cobra, my perception is true.
3. If I see a cobra when there is only a coiled rope lying on the ground, my perception is mistaken.
4. Yet, it is our perceptions - \ true or mistaken - that actually affect us, not reality
5. Automatically soon after our perceptions, - true or mistaken – three psychological processes take place within us:

**One:** Our perceptions - true or mistaken - control control our thoughts : If we perceive a cobra we shall think there is a cobra

**Two: Our thoughts control our feelings.**

If we think that there is a cobra, We shall feel really afraid

**Three Our feelings control our behavior**

If we feel afraid of the cobra, we shall run away from it.

6. The sum total of our perceptions – *true or mistaken ones* - we have had, - about anyone or anything, will build up the “images” we have of people and things.
7. We refer to them, for instance as “Self-image” “God’s Image” “People’s Image”, “My country image” etc....
8. We can refer also to them as “The Idea” we have, about people or things, like my idea of self, of God, of home, country, religion, caste, etc.
9. **The images - the sum total of our perceptions – about persons and things, control our thoughts, our feelings and our actions in relation to them.**
10. **In real life, we are not so much affected by things, events or people around us, as they really are, but by the image or idea we have of them!**  
For instance:
  - If a child has an image of his teacher as a very strict and stern person, he is likely to behave in class.
  - While shopping, we do not buy the goods for what they are, but by the image we have of them.
  - Advertising is the art of creating “images” and “brands” of the goods advertised.
  - Are those images and brands true or not? Mostly are not accurate, but false, exaggerated or inflated.
  - Very often we buy books attracted by the color and the beauty of their covers, not by worthiness of their contents.
11. In order to change our way of thinking, feeling and inter-acting with God, others, events or any other thing, first of all, we have to change the image or idea we have of them!
12. And in order to change our image or idea of them, first, we have to change our perception of them.
13. We have always to critically question the validity of our perceptions!

## **Therefore**

Be critical. Verify things by yourself

Don't act on first impressions.

Not all the perceptions we have of events, persons and things  
are accurate, true, and real.

Don't take it for true whatever you read in the papers, see in the T.V., or you  
come to know through gossiping and rumor mongering

Be suspicious of Ads. Commercial Propaganda, Political News and Comments