

Virgil Jan 23 - Written By

William Hazlitt: 'Life is the art of being well deceived and in order that the deception may succeed it must be habitual and uninterrupted.'



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In his thought-provoking quote, William Hazlitt suggests that life itself is an art form comprised of well-executed deceptions. According to Hazlitt, for deception to truly succeed, it must become a habitual and uninterrupted practice. At first glance, one might interpret this quote with a sense of cynicism or skepticism, viewing deception as an inherently negative aspect of human existence. However, upon deeper reflection, the quote introduces an unexpected philosophical concept, challenging us to ponder the complex relationship between truth, illusion, and the nature of reality. In a straightforward interpretation, Hazlitt's quote suggests that deception is an integral part of our everyday lives. We often present ourselves in a particular light, wearing masks to navigate



often present ourselves in a particular light, wearing masks to navigate various social situations. We may embellish our achievements or downplay our failures, creating intricate webs of deceit to protect ourselves or to gain favor. While we may associate deception with dishonesty, Hazlitt's perspective invites us to view it as an art form, a skill that must be perfected and practiced with finesse. The importance of this quote lies in its recognition of the omnipresence of deception in human society. It sheds light on the intricate ways in which we, as individuals, deceive both ourselves and others, often blurring the line between reality and illusion. Hazlitt implies that our adherence to habitual patterns of deception is essential for its success. It suggests that we are intricate actors, performing a grand theater production of our lives, with deception serving as the very foundation of our existence. However, an unexpected philosophical concept emerges when we examine the quote from a different angle. If life is indeed an art of being well deceived, then what role does truth play in this grand illusion? Is there inherent value in deception, or is it merely a survival mechanism in a world of uncertainty? Let us not forget Descartes' famous quote, "I think, therefore I am." If we exist only insofar as we deceive, does our existence lose its validity without deception? The philosophical contrast arises between the idea of life as an art of deception and the pursuit of truth. At first glance, these ideas may appear contradictory. Truth suggests a stripping away of illusion, an unveiling of reality, while deception thrives on obscuring true intentions. Yet, perhaps truth and deception are not diametrically opposed but rather complementary forces within the human experience. It is possible to argue that the pursuit of truth necessitates a degree of deception. As we strive to uncover objective truths about ourselves and the world around us, we must acknowledge the inherent limitations of our perception and understanding. In this pursuit, we may inevitably deceive ourselves, constructing subjective truths that serve as temporary guides to navigate an otherwise unfathomable reality. Indeed, the art of deception can be seen as a means of adaptation, survival, and even personal growth. It allows us to conceal vulnerabilities, present our best selves, and navigate social intricacies. Through habitual and uninterrupted deception, we create a version of reality that aligns with our desires and aspirations. In many ways, this art form enables us to cope with the complexities and uncertainties of life. In conclusion, William Hazlitt's quote offers a fascinating perspective on life as an art of deception. While it initially seems to praise the skillful execution of deceit, it also prompts us to consider the role of truth in this grand performance. The coexistence of deception and truth invites us to reflect on the intricate dance between illusion and reality, raising profound questions about the nature of our existence. Ultimately, it is through exploring this complexity that we can gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world we inhabit.



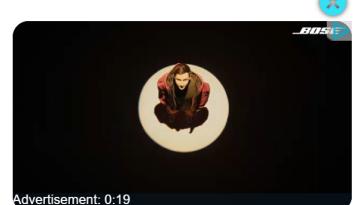
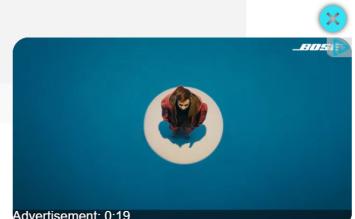
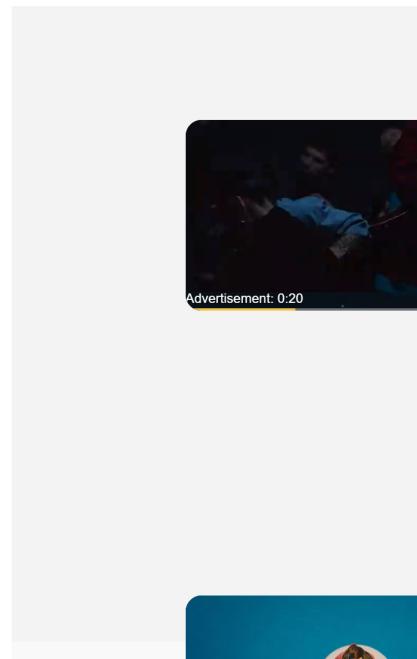
⟨ Roy Rogers: 'What's a butterfly garden without butterflies?' Sarah Silverman: 'I like my life alone.' ⟩

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