

Useful Free Booklets Series

# Distracted by Pseudosciences

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This booklet has been created to encourage open discussion, thoughtful study and careful critical enquiry. It is intended as a resource that invites readers to question, reflect and explore ideas deeply, rather than accept them without consideration. Permission is given to reproduce the content of this booklet for any purpose.

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## **Drowning in nonsense**

We live in a world drowning in information and starving for understanding. At any given moment, someone is claiming that carrots cure cancer, that breathing in a particular rhythm unlocks ancient powers, or that your liver is holding emotional trauma from a breakup in 2007. These things are not said quietly, in some corner of the internet where the unwell mutter to themselves. They are shouted from platforms with millions of followers, dressed up with hashtags, TEDx stages, and white coats bought from costume shops. The age of reason, we were told, had arrived. What we got instead was the age of endless opinion, undiagnosed narcissism, and science-flavoured fantasy.

This is not just a failure of education. It is the success of confusion. For every clear explanation of reality, there are ten thousand distractions promising magic. You can learn how your immune system works or buy a pastel-coloured “immune booster” that does absolutely nothing but makes you feel like you are doing something. You can understand the basics of psychology or follow an influencer who tells you that trauma is stored in your hips and can be released with a particular yoga pose. Guess which one goes viral. We are not seeing a population that is too stupid to grasp real science. We are seeing one trained to prefer the feeling of understanding to the work of understanding.

The rise of pseudoscience is not accidental. It is not just that people believe silly things. There is an enormous market for those silly things and an entire industry built on exploiting that market. Real science is slow, cautious, full of doubt and revision. Pseudoscience is fast, confident, emotionally satisfying, and always ready to sell you something. A scientist will say, “We do not know yet.” A fraud will say, “I have the answer, and it comes in a bottle.” Which one do you think wins on Instagram?

Even worse, modern pseudoscience does not need to contradict science outright. It just needs to mimic it. It borrows words like “energy”, “quantum”, “frequency”, “toxins”, and “holistic”, then hurls them together in a salad of nonsense. A crystal does not emit healing vibrations. A juice cleanse does not detoxify your body. There is no hidden water memory, no pineal gland awakening, no “quantum consciousness”. But put a lab coat on someone, hang a stethoscope around their neck, and sprinkle in a few misused technical terms, and people will nod along as if they are hearing truth

instead of gibberish.

The tragedy here is not just personal. It is cultural. Entire societies are now shaped by misinformation, where the loudest voice sets the narrative and credentials mean less than confidence. The internet has equalised access to information but not access to understanding. This has created a landscape where a teenager on TikTok can declare vaccines dangerous and be taken as seriously as someone who has studied epidemiology for twenty years. Once, ignorance was a passive state. Now it is active, performative and monetised.

What makes this worse is the deliberate blurring of boundaries. Influencers declare themselves “science communicators” while selling powdered mushrooms that supposedly boost cognition. Journalists chase traffic by covering miracle diets as if they deserve equal weight with decades of medical consensus. Schools cut back on science education while spiritual charlatans are invited to wellness fairs. Everywhere, the serious is displaced by the shiny. The useful is drowned out by the exciting. The truth is no longer unpopular. It is unfashionable.

And so we find ourselves here. We are drowning in nonsense, with people more convinced than ever that they are enlightened. But make no mistake, this is not enlightenment. It is a lightshow: flashy, impressive, and completely fake. Real knowledge requires patience, doubt, humility and the courage to say “I do not know.” Pseudoscience requires none of that. It only needs a confident voice and an audience trained to mistake conviction for wisdom.

We are not doomed. We are distracted, and that distraction has consequences. The body count of pseudoscience is not theoretical. People die when they trust magic over medicine. They go bankrupt chasing energy fields and buying false hope in powdered form. They waste their lives seeking meaning in planets, in vibrations, in snake oil wearing a lab coat. This booklet will examine exactly how we got here and how we keep falling for it. If we cannot tell the difference between science and a sales pitch, we are not thinking. We are shopping. And thinking is not something society seems particularly interested in anymore.

## **The gospel of food**

Once upon a time, food was something you ate so you would not die. It came from a farm, it went on a plate, and it either tasted good or it did not. You did not need a PhD to understand it, and nobody treated a piece of broccoli like it had mystical

powers. Fast forward to today, and food has become the new religion. Except this one has no gods, only influencers. No sacred texts, only recipe books with titles like “Clean Eating for a Higher You”. No miracles, only before-and-after photos of people who claim that cutting out gluten cured their depression and healed their childhood trauma. It is not nutrition. It is a cult.

The cult of food does not just exist on the internet. It has spread into supermarkets, cafes, schools, and even hospitals. Children are now taught to fear carbohydrates, worship kale, and believe that sugar is a drug. Adults are no better. They speak about “toxins” in processed food, as if your digestive system is a fragile flower that can be shattered by a biscuit. Never mind that your liver exists specifically to deal with toxins. Facts like that do not sell almond milk or turmeric shots. Fear does.

This cult has saints and sinners. Saints are those who follow the latest trends: veganism, keto, paleo, raw food, intermittent fasting, or some hybrid abomination that involves only eating organic lettuce dipped in coconut oil during the full moon. Sinners are those who eat gluten, dairy, or meat. And like all cults, it is not enough for believers to follow the rules. They must also preach. Social media is full of evangelists who post pictures of their lunch with captions like “nourishing my temple” or “eating clean for my mental clarity”, as if they are one avocado away from enlightenment. It is not a meal. It is a sermon.

Part of the problem is that actual nutritional science is slow and uncertain. It deals in probabilities, population studies, and long-term effects. That is boring. It also admits when it is wrong, which is unacceptable in the age of social media certainty. Enter the pseudoscientific food guru. These people speak in absolutes. They tell you that this one ingredient is the key to everything, or that this one food is silently killing you. They build entire careers on demonising or deifying specific items. One week it is eggs. The next, it is bread. Then it is seed oils, followed by fruit, followed by whatever some influencer misread in a scientific journal they never finished. It never ends. Fear sells better than balance.

The damage is not just in waistlines or wallets. It is in how people now think about food. Meals are no longer a pleasure, or even a necessity. They are a moral decision. People do not eat. They fuel. They detox. They align their gut health with their mental state. Food is not food anymore. It is medicine, therapy, identity, and performance art. And like all performance art, it demands an audience. Hence the endless photos, the branded smoothie bowls, the partnerships with supplement companies, and the

hushed tones used when speaking about gluten, as if it were a war crime.

The supplement industry thrives in this madness. Instead of trusting actual food to provide nutrients, people now consume powders, pills, and potions. They drink collagen because someone on YouTube said it makes your skin glow. They take magnesium for sleep, probiotics for anxiety, and something called “adaptogens” because Gwyneth Paltrow once mentioned it while steaming her vagina. It is medieval alchemy reborn in health food stores, repackaged in clean fonts and matte packaging. There is little evidence any of it works. But it does not need to. Belief is enough.

And then there is the paranoia. Food cultists fear pesticides, preservatives, and anything that cannot be grown on a windowsill. They speak as if a single bite of the wrong substance will rewrite their DNA. They avoid entire aisles of the supermarket like they are radioactive zones. Ironically, many of these same people happily take psychedelics at festivals, vape god-knows-what from plastic devices, and binge on liver cleanses that do nothing but upset their bowels. It is not about health. It is about signalling. They want to be seen as pure, enlightened, and above the grubby habits of the unwashed masses who still eat white bread.

In the end, this obsession with food as faith is not making people healthier. It is making them anxious, self-righteous, and disconnected from reality. They have traded common sense for magical thinking, and science for influencers who barely passed high school biology. The gospel of food promises salvation. What it delivers is guilt, confusion, and an endless cycle of eating rules that change with the algorithm. If you want to know how bad it has become, just walk into any cafe that offers “bulletproof mushroom coffee” and watch people pay eight dollars for a cup of nonsense and a side of smug. This is not nutrition. It is theatre. And the actors do not even know they are performing.

## **Brain hacks and fake healing**

Modern life is stressful. People feel tired, anxious, distracted, and overwhelmed. That is not news. What is news, or at least what passes for news, is the flood of self-styled experts claiming they can fix all of that with a handful of brain hacks, a healing crystal, and a vague understanding of trauma. It is a growing industry based on the idea that your problems are not complex, not social, not economic. They are simply caused by something misaligned inside you. This is not science. It is a sales pitch with

a wellness filter.

The modern self-help movement has abandoned anything that resembles effort or responsibility. In its place is the cult of easy fixes. You do not need therapy. You just need a grounding exercise involving your feet and some positive affirmations. You do not need rest. You need adaptogens, mushroom coffee, or a cold plunge at 6am. You do not need to change your life. You need to journal about gratitude and realign your chakras. There is an entire generation now convinced that spiritual healing and neuroscience are the same thing, because someone on YouTube put a brain diagram next to a crystal and called it a breakthrough.

At the centre of this fantasy is the word “trauma”. Once it described specific and serious events, like abuse or war. Now it describes anything uncomfortable. You missed a deadline. You were not hugged enough as a child. Someone was rude to you on public transport. That is your trauma. This kind of language inflation is not just silly. It is dangerous. It turns real suffering into a fashion statement and convinces people that ordinary life is pathological. It sells the idea that your mind is broken and needs constant fixing, which conveniently leads to a shopfront full of answers.

Psychobabble has replaced psychology. Instead of actual therapy, people now recite phrases like “hold space”, “honour your feelings”, and “manifest your reality”. They talk about boundaries as if drawing one is a magical shield. They say “do the work”, but the work never involves reading a book or questioning a belief. It involves buying a course, attending a retreat, or making a vision board. This is not emotional growth. It is play-acting. And like all performance, it is judged by how convincing it looks, not whether it works.

This is where fake healing becomes profitable. If you convince someone they are broken, you can sell them anything with a soothing tone and a spiritual aesthetic. Breathwork sessions that promise calm. Reiki treatments to “balance your energy”. Inner child therapy to explain every bad decision. Energy healing, sound baths, and trauma-informed yoga, all delivered with soft lighting and soft voices. Each practice comes with its own set of rituals and jargon, and nearly all of them are led by people with no actual training. None of it is measurable. None of it is testable. And none of it needs to be, because it is wrapped in emotion, not evidence. It is healing theatre for people who are too suspicious of medicine and too impatient for actual therapy.

There is also the obsession with neuroplasticity, usually mentioned by people who could not spell it. They say the brain can rewire itself, which is true. They then use this

fact to justify anything from daily affirmations to eating cacao under the moon. This is not science. It is using the prestige of science to dress up nonsense. It is no different from ancient snake oil sellers invoking the four humours. The terms change. The trick does not.

Social media platforms are flooded with reels and videos declaring that “this one simple technique changed my life”. They all follow the same structure: a personal struggle, a pseudoscientific insight, and a miraculous recovery. The message is always the same, and it is poisonous. If you are still suffering, then clearly you have done something wrong. You have not journaled hard enough. You have missed a cold plunge. You have failed to complete the inner work. Healing becomes not a process but a form of punishment, a measure of your moral worth. You are not allowed to rest, to feel unsure, or to admit that life is simply difficult. Instead, you must be constantly self-optimising, forever chasing your “higher self” through rituals that serve no purpose except to give you the illusion of control.

Real psychological work is slow, often painful, and usually quite boring. It involves evidence, time, and the uncomfortable process of facing hard truths. Fake healing avoids all of that. It offers euphoric highs, spiritual language, and the illusion of progress. You feel better, for a while. Then the next crash comes, and you need the next ritual, the next trick, the next lie. It is an addiction masquerading as self-care.

This is what happens when people lose trust in science and are left with slogans. They do not get healthier. They get lost. They turn pain into personality, therapy into theatre, and recovery into performance. And all the while, the people selling the show are getting richer. The one thing these fake healers understand perfectly is that desperation pays.

## **Crystal cults and quantum lies**

There was a time when crystals were just rocks. Shiny, decorative, occasionally stuck on a bracelet or a geode lamp. Now they are sacred objects. People charge them in moonlight, cleanse them in salt water, and believe they radiate healing energy. They are not just pretty stones anymore. They are health products, spiritual tools, and, apparently, ancient medicine. It would be funny if it were not so pathetic. We have landed rovers on Mars, yet people still think rubbing a lump of rose quartz on their chest will unblock their heart chakra.

This nonsense is not isolated. It is part of a larger trend that sells scientific-

sounding rubbish to people who cannot tell the difference between a research paper and a lifestyle blog. And the most powerful word in this scam is “quantum”. Nobody using the word in these contexts knows what it means. That is the point. “Quantum” is the modern magic word. Say it, and anything sounds plausible. Quantum healing. Quantum consciousness. Quantum energy. In reality, quantum mechanics is one of the most precise and tested areas of physics. It deals in particles, probabilities, and the strange behaviours of matter at microscopic scales. It does not explain your emotions, validate your horoscope, or power your amethyst pendant.

The crystal and energy healing industries thrive because they do not need to prove anything. They only need to feel convincing. People report feeling calmer, more “aligned”, more “in tune” after placing a stone on their forehead. But so do people after a warm bath. That is not evidence. That is mood. These industries exploit the placebo effect, repackaged as ancient wisdom. The fact that these claims are never subjected to proper testing is not a flaw. It is the design. They are vague enough to avoid falsification, emotional enough to inspire belief, and commercial enough to turn into product lines.

The language is always the same. Talk of vibrations, frequencies, energy fields, and balance. These words are real in physics. They have meanings, measurements, and equations. In the hands of crystal peddlers and “energy healers”, they become spiritual wallpaper—meaningless, but impressive. It is a kind of linguistic theft, where the credibility of science is smeared across pseudoscience like a badge of honour. They are not explaining reality. They are decorating nonsense with borrowed words.

Much of this can be traced to the modern obsession with “energy” as a vague, catch-all explanation for anything people do not understand. People talk about having “bad energy” or feeling someone’s “vibe” as if that were a measurable force. In physics, energy is the capacity to do work. In spiritual marketing, it is the capacity to sell a bracelet for ninety-five dollars. Reiki practitioners claim to channel life force energy through their hands. No one has ever measured it. No one has ever demonstrated it under controlled conditions. But that does not matter. Clients are not paying for results. They are paying for the theatre of care.

Then there is the “law of attraction”, a concept as empty as the people selling it. Think positive thoughts, visualise your goals, and the universe will deliver. It is magical thinking rebranded as personal development. The idea is not new. It is just narcissism with a better marketing team. According to this logic, good things happen



because you attract them, and bad things happen because you were not thinking correctly. It is not only false; it is cruel. It turns poverty, illness, and misfortune into a failure of mindset. And it conveniently protects the frauds selling the dream, because if it does not work, it is your fault.

All of this flourishes because there is demand. People feel lost, sick, overwhelmed, and ignored by modern medicine. Instead of demanding better care, they seek comfort in fantasies. They want healing to be gentle, intuitive, and pretty. Crystals are pretty. Scientific studies are not. Crystals sparkle. Spreadsheets do not. That is the real competition. It is not between science and spirituality. It is between evidence and aesthetics.

The result is a growing population that believes it is becoming wiser, more conscious, more in tune with the universe, while in reality it is being drained of money, time, and critical thought. They are not being healed. They are being sedated—emotionally, intellectually, and financially. And the people who sell these illusions know exactly what they are doing. This is not harmless fun. It is a quiet epidemic of magical thinking, sold through hashtags, polished stones, and misused vocabulary. You do not need to understand it to believe it. In fact, belief depends on not understanding it at all.

## **Horoscope delusions**

It begins as a joke. Someone reads their horoscope aloud from the back of a magazine, and everyone laughs. The predictions are vague, the language is ridiculous, and the whole thing seems harmless. Then someone starts planning their day around it, blaming Mercury for missed appointments, and treating planetary motion as if it were a mood disorder. That is when astrology stops being silly and starts becoming dangerous. Not because the stars are doing anything, but because people are surrendering their ability to think.

Astrology is not new. It is ancient. But so are bloodletting and human sacrifice. Age does not make a belief respectable. It just means it has had more time to infect culture. The idea that celestial bodies influence human behaviour is one of the oldest and most thoroughly debunked superstitions in human history. Planets are not sending you messages or shaping your character. They are balls of gas and rock, light years away, obeying the laws of gravity. They do not care about your career, your mood, or your relationship with your mother.

Despite this, astrology is everywhere. It has been reborn on social media as a kind of personality quiz for people who find Myers-Briggs too scientific. There are entire platforms dedicated to telling you who you are based on your “big three”, which refers to your sun, moon, and rising signs, as if slicing the sky into twelve parts somehow reveals your soul. These charts are not designed to inform. They are designed to flatter. They tell you that you are intuitive, complex, passionate, and misunderstood. Never lazy, never shallow, never dull. It is astrology as therapy, except the only thing it heals is your ego.

The language of astrology is always non-committal. You may feel tension. You might experience growth. There could be challenges ahead. This is not insight. It is cold reading. The statements are vague enough to apply to anyone and positive enough to keep you coming back. That is not coincidence. It is design. Astrology survives because it tells people what they want to hear, and like all good lies, it offers comfort without requiring thought.

Then comes the tribalism. People do not just read horoscopes. They identify with them. They introduce themselves by star sign and justify toxic behaviour by saying, “I cannot help it, I am a Scorpio.” They avoid dating people based on birth charts. It is discrimination disguised as mysticism. You are not making decisions. You are outsourcing them to the sky. And all the while, the people who promote this garbage are making money through apps, books, and consultation sessions that promise to reveal your destiny for a fee.

Astrology is not harmless fun. It is a gateway to magical thinking. It encourages people to believe that the universe is about them, that they are special, that randomness has meaning. It teaches them to interpret coincidence as design and to see connection where there is none. That kind of thinking does not stay confined to horoscopes. It spills into every part of life, weakening critical thinking and blurring the line between truth and fantasy. In a world already drowning in misinformation, that is the last thing anyone needs.

What makes astrology so persistent is its emotional appeal. It flatters your sense of importance, soothes your anxieties, and makes the world feel ordered. But that order is fake. It is not based on evidence. It is not testable, measurable, or repeatable. If you run the same birth chart through three different astrologers, you will get three different interpretations. That is not science. That is storytelling, and not even good storytelling, because the characters never change and the plot never advances.

There is nothing spiritual about giving away your judgment to superstition, and nothing wise about letting the position of Saturn determine whether you take a job or end a relationship. That is not enlightenment. It is surrender. The people who encourage this nonsense are not mystics. They are entertainers, wearing the masks of priest, psychologist, and friend, but without the knowledge or integrity to be any of those things.

If you need guidance, look to people who know you, who understand context, and who use evidence. Do not rely on strangers with telescopes and symbols. The stars may be beautiful, but they are not your therapist, and they do not write your future. That is your job, if you are willing to take it back.

## **Detox, diet pills and other frauds**

The human body already has a detox system. It is called the liver. It does not need lemon juice, cayenne pepper, charcoal powder, or green sludge in a bottle labelled “cleanse”. Yet the word “detox” has become one of the most profitable lies in the wellness industry. It promises purification, weight loss, and renewed energy, all without evidence, science, or results. It is not medicine. It is theatre. And like all bad theatre, the costumes look impressive, the script sounds important, and nothing real actually happens.

Every few months, a new detox trend appears. Juice cleanses. Colon cleanses. Tea toxes. Sugar detoxes. Heavy metal flushes. Each one is marketed as the reset your body desperately needs, despite the fact that your body is already resetting itself all day, every day. If it were not, you would be in a hospital. Or dead. But wellness culture is not interested in biology. It is interested in marketing, and the word “detox” taps directly into anxiety. People want to feel in control, especially when life feels chaotic. So they grab a bottle, choke down a powder, and tell themselves they are doing something healthy.

This scam works because it mimics the language of science while offering none of its discipline. Marketers use words like “toxins”, “purification”, and “metabolic boost” with the confidence of someone who has never read a textbook. They never specify which toxins are being removed, how those toxins got there, or how the product actually expels them. That vagueness is deliberate. If they named a chemical, they would have to show how the product interacts with it. If they described a process, they would need proof. Instead, they rely on before-and-after photos, customer

testimonials, and a carefully curated aesthetic of clean fonts, pastel colours, and smiling people with flat stomachs.

Diet pills are no better. They promise fat loss without effort, often by increasing metabolism, suppressing appetite, or “blocking” the absorption of fat or carbohydrates. Most of them either do nothing or cause side effects worse than the problem they claim to solve. Heart palpitations, insomnia, diarrhoea, and dependency are common. But the deeper damage is psychological. Diet pills turn weight into a moral failing and self-control into something you can buy. They reinforce the toxic idea that health is about thinness, and that thinness is available to anyone who is desperate enough to pop the right capsule.

These products never target informed adults. They target the vulnerable. Teenagers. Exhausted parents. People with chronic conditions. People who feel invisible. They are told that their body is a problem and that the solution is simple, natural, and available in a subscription pack. It is emotional blackmail with a wellness sticker slapped on top. It preys on fear, vanity, and insecurity, then calls itself empowerment.

The industry hides behind the word “natural” as if it were a guarantee of safety or effectiveness. Arsenic is natural. So is mercury. Nature is not a quality control department. But people have been taught to fear chemicals and worship plants, regardless of what those chemicals do or what the plants contain. If a product says “plant-based” and comes in a recyclable box, it is assumed to be safe, even if it does not work, even if it does harm, even if the only thing it cleanses is your bank account.

There is also the ritual aspect. People feel better because they are doing something. The routine of mixing a powder, sipping a tea, or following a programme creates a sense of discipline. It feels like progress. It feels like healing. But feeling is not fact. Just because something makes you feel in control does not mean it is working. Pseudoscience thrives in that gap between sensation and substance. It fills the silence left by slow, real solutions with noise that sounds scientific but is not.

Real health is boring. It involves sleep, movement, balanced nutrition, medical advice, and time. It is slow. It is difficult. It does not come in a box. That is why it does not sell. Detox products, diet pills, and their countless variations succeed because they offer magic disguised as medicine. They turn discomfort into urgency and promise a fix that feels easier than the truth.

And the truth is this: if a product claims to “cleanse” your body, burn fat

effortlessly, or balance your hormones with herbs and Instagram quotes, it is a lie. Not a misunderstanding. Not a harmless exaggeration. A lie. One that steals money, wastes time, and drags public understanding of health back into the medieval era. These are not health products. They are props in a performance that never ends. And the audience keeps paying to see the same act, again and again, because the script is comforting and the science is nowhere in sight.

## **Silicon snake oil**

In the beginning, technology promised progress. It gave us vaccines, satellites, electric cars, and the internet. Then it gave us apps that count our steps, track our bowel movements, and claim to optimise our brainwaves with coloured lights. Somewhere along the way, the line between science and science fiction was not just blurred. It was erased. Welcome to the era of techno-mysticism, where pseudoscience has found its newest, shiniest home in the glowing glass of your smartphone.

Silicon Valley was once a hub of engineering and logic. Now it sells meditation headbands that claim to tune your alpha waves, sleep monitors that pretend to diagnose disorders, and biohacking devices that promise to unlock your full potential, whatever that means. The language is familiar by now. Words like optimise, enhance, activate, decode, and reboot are computer terms being forced onto biology by people who think the body is just wet software. It is not. You cannot hack your mitochondria by sitting in a red light box. You cannot upgrade your nervous system by standing on a vibrating plate while listening to whale sounds.

This new digital wellness movement borrows the language of both medicine and computing, repackaging ancient pseudoscience in futuristic wrapping. Old nonsense becomes new nonsense, just with better product design. Acupuncture becomes electro-stimulation therapy. Aromatherapy becomes neuro-scent protocols. Healing crystals are embedded in wearable devices that track your energy field through sensors that measure nothing. The same baseless ideas return, but now they come with Bluetooth.

The market is full of gadgets that do absolutely nothing but look like they do something. There are bracelets that claim to block electromagnetic radiation, despite physics saying otherwise. There are rings that promise sleep improvement through vibration. There are apps that scan your face and claim to detect stress levels. None of this is regulated. None of it is verified. But it all looks impressive, especially if you

have no idea how the human body works.

The problem is not just gullibility; it is reverence. People trust technology, even when it lies. They see sleek design, flashing LEDs, and graphs on a screen, and assume it must be accurate. After all, it came from a lab. A tech company made it. There is a circuit board inside. That is enough to suspend disbelief. But this is not science. It is marketing disguised as medicine, using complexity as camouflage and novelty as credibility.

And then there are the influencers. Tech entrepreneurs with no medical training spout theories about dopamine cycles, cortisol resistance, and circadian hacking as if they were conducting peer-reviewed research. They wear glucose monitors even if they are not diabetic. They fast for 48 hours and then film themselves recovering with a liquid nootropic stack. They live in a fantasy where biology is optional and all problems can be solved with hardware, software, or supplements made in someone's garage.

This is not innovation. It is performance. It is the merging of the startup cult with the self-help cult. Venture capital meets vitamins. A podcast episode becomes a wellness manifesto. A product launch becomes a spiritual awakening. The result is an arms race of nonsense, where credibility comes not from proof, but from followers, packaging, and the confidence to say it works for them.

Real science is cautious. It demands replication, measurement, scrutiny, and time. Techno-mysticism is the opposite. It is fast, self-referential, and allergic to doubt. It mimics the form of science with data, graphs, and terminology, but it delivers none of the substance. And because it is packaged through glowing devices and persuasive interfaces, it slips past the defences of even the moderately sceptical.

This is the future of pseudoscience. It will not just be in books, in spas, or on retreat brochures. It will be in your phone, on your wrist, and sold during your morning scroll. It will not wear robes or chant about chakras. It will wear a hoodie, carry a laptop, and talk about neuro-optimisation. It will not preach spirituality. It will promise upgrades. And like all good cons, it will succeed by pretending to be progress. The damage it does is not just financial. It is intellectual. A culture that mistakes design for truth and novelty for knowledge is not evolving. It is being fooled in high definition.

## **Addicted to conspiracies**

Conspiracies used to live in basements. Now they trend on social media. What was

once muttered behind closed doors by men wearing tinfoil hats is now broadcast in high definition, shared by influencers, and repeated by people who should know better. It is not just fringe thinkers anymore. It is your uncle, your yoga teacher, your friend from school who now believes that everything is controlled by shadowy elites. Conspiracy thinking has gone mainstream, and it is poisoning public discourse.

At the heart of every conspiracy theory is a simple idea: you are being lied to. The government, the media, the scientists, and the experts are all in on it. The truth is hidden, but you, the enlightened outsider, have seen through the lies. This belief is seductive precisely because it flatters. It tells you that you are not confused or overwhelmed like everyone else. You are the one who sees clearly. You are wise. You are awake, while the rest are blindly following orders. That feeling of special knowledge, of having cracked a secret code, is addictive. Like all addictions, it does not lead anywhere healthy.

The internet has turbocharged this delusion. Algorithms are built to feed you whatever keeps you engaged, and nothing holds attention like outrage, suspicion, or fear. One video leads to another. One post becomes a rabbit hole. Soon, someone who searched for vaccine side effects ends up watching a documentary about microchips and mind control. It happens because the system rewards extremism, and nuance does not hold attention in the same way that certainty does. Certainty is easier to digest, easier to market, and much harder to question. Conspiracy theories offer that certainty in a world that feels increasingly chaotic.

But the real danger is not just the content. It is the mindset. Conspiracy thinking trains people to distrust evidence, reject expertise, and value emotion over analysis. Once someone is convinced that truth is whatever feels right, you can sell them anything—alternative medicine, political extremism, or spiritual nonsense. It all blends together in a soup of paranoia, where there are no experts, only hidden agendas, no facts, only manipulated narratives, and no mistakes, only cover-ups.

This thinking is not just irrational. It is actively hostile to learning. Every time a piece of evidence is presented, it is dismissed as fake or manipulated. Every contradiction becomes proof of a deeper deception. There is no way to disprove a conspiracy, because the theory is designed to absorb every challenge and reinterpret it as part of the plot. It is not a model of reality. It is a belief system, defended with the zeal of religion and maintained with the rigidity of addiction.

And like addiction, it escalates. A person who starts out questioning mainstream

news might soon believe that school shootings are false flags, that climate change is a hoax, or that world leaders are part of a satanic cult. There is no bottom. Each descent feels like discovery, because it confirms the suspicion that the world is corrupt and only a few have the courage to see it. It is not critical thinking. It is a performance of scepticism used to conceal intellectual surrender.

The irony is that some conspiracies are real. Governments do lie. Corporations do manipulate. Institutions do fail. But those truths are discovered through investigation, not invention. They require evidence, not intuition. The difference between journalism and conspiracy theory is the difference between proof and paranoia. One aims to expose what is hidden through facts. The other builds what is imagined out of suspicion.

The social cost is enormous. Families are split. Friendships dissolve. Entire communities fracture under the weight of mistrust. Public health suffers. Elections are undermined. Violence is encouraged. And while all of this unfolds, the people spreading the lies either profit from the attention or vanish deeper into the illusion. Some do both.

Conspiracy thinking does not produce insight. It produces isolation, anger, and dependence. It replaces complexity with caricature and turns disagreement into a battle between good and evil. Every discussion becomes a loyalty test. You are either with the supposed truth or you are part of the lie. Dialogue is replaced by accusation. Progress is replaced by panic. And the worst part is that those trapped in it believe they are thinking freely.

In reality, they are following a script designed to keep them anxious, reactive, and permanently searching for an enemy. There is nothing empowering about that. It is not awakening. It is intellectual decay pretending to be resistance. And if we do not start calling it what it is, we will be left with a society unable to tell the difference between curiosity and delusion, between asking questions and refusing answers.

## **Science without the fairy dust**

Real science is not exciting, sexy, or sparkling. It rarely delivers breakthroughs in time for dinner. It is slow, methodical and filled with uncertainty. It works by making careful observations, testing ideas against reality, admitting when they fail and trying again. This is the part the public does not want; they want the magic, the certainty and the transformation. If real science cannot provide it, pseudoscience will gladly step in



wearing its lab coat backwards.

The popular image of science has been warped beyond recognition. In films, scientists are visionaries who speak in riddles, invent time machines or discover life-saving cures overnight. In reality, most of them spend years in labs trying to figure out why their control group is acting strangely. Their language is cautious, their claims are limited and their conclusions are provisional. That is the strength of science, its willingness to be wrong. But to the average person raised on absolute answers, that looks like weakness.

This misunderstanding is exactly what makes pseudoscience so appealing. It sounds like science but behaves like religion. It offers certainty, emotional payoff and a clear moral lesson. It never says “we do not know”; it says “this is the truth” and dares you to disagree. That confidence is mistaken for clarity, but it is not clarity. It is costume, and beneath it is nothing but wishful thinking and empty repetition.

Scientific language, when stripped of its meaning, becomes a powerful tool for tricksters. They use words like “frequency”, “quantum”, “neuro”, “cellular” and “energy” with the precision of a poet and the knowledge of a houseplant. They wave around studies that were never peer-reviewed or even properly read, and they use diagrams like decorations. It looks impressive, especially to those who never learned to ask the right questions, but it is theatre. It has nothing to do with how science works.

Proper science is designed to be hard to fool, and that is why it takes so long. Studies need replication, results need to be measured and repeated, hypotheses must be falsifiable and theories must change when evidence changes. These are not weaknesses. They are safeguards. But to the pseudoscientific mind, these safeguards are inconvenient. They slow down the message and get in the way of the sale.

This is why real scientists are often ignored. They speak plainly or with uncertainty, admit gaps in their knowledge and focus on the data. Meanwhile, the pseudoscientist offers a personal story, an emotional plea and a product. Guess which one goes viral. People trust feelings more than figures, especially when the figures are hard to read.

It does not help that much of science is buried behind paywalls, filled with jargon or distorted by headlines looking for clicks. The media plays a large role in this confusion. Every week, a study is reported as if it were a revelation, even when it is just a small shift in probability. One day, red wine is good for you; the next, it causes cancer. This is not the fault of science. It is the fault of those who translate it badly or worse, dishonestly.

What science needs is not more drama. It needs better communication and people willing to say that truth is often dull, progress is slow and the best answer might still be “we are not sure”. It needs to reclaim its credibility by refusing to compete with charlatans on their terms. Science is not a performance. It is a method, and its value lies in its humility, not its headlines.

The tragedy is that while real science quietly improves the world, fake science steals the spotlight. It makes promises science cannot make, offers miracles science would never trust and collects money science never asked for. It is winning the popularity contest not because it is right, but because it is shiny. In a culture that values style over substance, that is enough.

But it should not be. We need to learn again what makes science powerful. It is not its speed, certainty or charisma. It is its discipline, its refusal to pretend and its demand for evidence, even when the answer is disappointing. If more people understood that, we would have less noise, less confusion and fewer snake oil salesmen. Once you know how science actually works, you stop being impressed by those who only pretend.

## **Escape the circus**

By now, the pattern is obvious. People are not choosing pseudoscience because they are stupid. They are choosing it because it is easier, prettier, louder, and faster. It tells them what they want to hear, shows them what they want to see, and gives them a role in a performance where they are always the hero and never the fool. Real thinking has been replaced by acting. Real scepticism has been replaced by suspicion. Real science has been pushed to the edge of the stage while the clowns dance in the spotlight.

It is no accident that nonsense spreads faster than truth. Pseudoscience flatters your feelings. It does not ask for proof. It does not care about method. It only wants your belief, your money, and your silence when it fails. That silence is the cost of the show. You pretend it works, and in return, you get to feel clever, special, and in control. But you are not in control. You are a spectator clapping for illusions and calling it knowledge.

The solution is not another app or a prettier science textbook. It is learning to recognise when you are being entertained instead of informed. That begins with discomfort. You have to sit with the fact that real answers take time, that “I do not

know” is not a weakness but a foundation, and that your feelings are not facts and your intuition is not evidence. These are not comforting thoughts. They are abrasive. But they are necessary if you want to stop being manipulated.

Escaping the circus means stepping off the stage where everyone performs their identity and going back into a world where ideas matter more than image. It means ignoring the influencers and listening to the boring experts. It means asking not “Does this sound good?” but “Can this be tested?” It means choosing the long road, the hard one, the one without applause, because it leads somewhere real.

Most people will not take that path. They will keep sipping their mushroom coffee, reading their horoscopes, and believing they are healing their trauma with breathwork and stickers. That is the cost of a culture hooked on spectacle. But for anyone who is tired of the noise, the way out is still open. It just starts with silence. Not the silence of submission but the silence of listening, of asking better questions, of doubting what feels good and checking what is true.

This does not mean living without wonder. It means placing your wonder where it belongs, in the natural world, in the workings of the body, in the amazing, fragile process by which we learn what is real. There is more beauty in a single page of honest science than in all the glowing nonsense of the wellness industry. But you will never see it if you are too busy applauding the circus.

The question is simple. Do you want to be entertained or do you want to understand? If it is the first, there is plenty of glitter left, plenty of shows to watch, products to buy, and rituals to repeat. But if it is the second, then close the app, turn off the performance, and start thinking like it matters. Because it does, and nobody is going to do it for you.

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