4.9: We Want to Believe

The claim that Hillary Clinton was operating a child pornography ring was stated with no evidence. And yet that seemed enough to convince many individuals. Why? One reason is that it supports a stasis, or prior belief, and so very little proof is needed to accept it. Professor Kaye continues by arguing that, “if a lie is telling you something you want to hear, you’re more likely to think it’s true.”

This is part of our perception process where we process cognitions and information that is consistent to our currently held beliefs. This allows us to maintain our stasis, our relaxed state, and be comfortable. No matter what your political beliefs, allow yourself a level of discomfort by challenging your views with seemingly contradictory views.

Conned

Since 2008, consumer fraud in the United States has gone up by more than 60 percent. Online scams have more than doubled...The total money lost: $525 million.

For the total U.S. population, between 2011 and 2012 – the last period surveyed by the Federal Trade Commission – a little over 10 percent of adult or 25.6 million, had fallen victim to fraud...The majority of the cases, affecting just over 5 million adults, involved one scheme: fake weight-loss products.

Countless more cases go unreported...

We get a unique satisfaction from thinking ourselves invulnerable...safe in the knowledge that you are keener, savvier, more cynical and skeptical? They may fall for it. You? Never.

Introduction to book, The Confidence Game, Why We Fall for it Every Time by Maria Konnikova
Reference