

## ANGER, ADRENALINE, AND ARROGANCE: ADDICTION TO CERTAINTY

### COMMENTS

**Graham** says:

Speak for yourself, Joycelyn.

*Scenario:* I lent Joycelyn (not her real name) my favo(u)rite Oscar Peterson CD. She said she would return it on Saturday. Come Monday, I couldn't find the CD anywhere and I had no recollection of her giving it back to me. I called her.

"Joycelyn, where's my Peterson CD."

"Graham, I dropped it through your letter box just after lunch on Saturday."

"I didn't see it, and I would have noticed when I picked up this morning's post."

"Graham, I can tell you. I did drop your precious CD through your letter box."

"Oh".

I immediately think she must be right.

Conversely, if I had borrowed one of her CDs and the scenario had been reversed I would start to question whether I had, in fact, dropped it through her letter box.

**Joycelyn** says:

Graham, The only Oscar Peterson CD I have is "Oscar Peterson Trio + One: Clark Terry." I'm not certain how it came into my possession. Maybe you lent it to me.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to clarify or expand on this post. The conscious part of our brain can—and does—override the unconscious addiction to certainty. But since overriding our unconscious impulses and inclinations takes effort and energy, we're less able to do that when conscious attention is already depleted or when we're in the grip of strong emotions. That's when we're more likely to say and do things we later regret. That's when we're most likely to be convinced we're right.

In the scenario you present, you sound miffed rather than angry. You quite rightfully—and consciously—imagine that you could be mistaken. And your Oscar Peterson CD may indeed be precious to you, but you could probably replace it if your friend failed to return it, which is something you're consciously aware of.

However, if the CD were irreplaceable or if this were the fourth time your friend had borrowed a CD and failed to return it, your reaction would likely be different.

In the meantime, I applaud your cool-headed response in regard to your absent CD. Speaking for myself, I say the world needs a whole lot more of that. And I'm wondering what other Oscar Peterson CDs you would recommend.

**poetDonald** says:

I have no Oscar Peterson CDs. I had a couple of those vinyl things, but have no idea where they ventured to. Hopefully that is enough to get me entrance to this comment thread.

So Joycelyn, there will be posts on how to deal with this rather common problem (lost CDs not withstanding). Maybe meditation, mindfulness, and a few other gems?

**Joycelyn** says:

I agree, Donald, anything that enhances awareness helps, including meditation and mindfulness for the long haul and even counting to 10 in the moment. Giving in to righteous indignation can become a habit. Not giving in can also become a habit. Maybe having an "I could be wrong" haiku would be helpful. Something short enough to remember but long enough to give us pause in the heat of the moment.

What do you think?

**poetDonald** says:

Maybe one of these will work:

take a deep breath  
slowly repeat after me  
I could be wrong

there is no way  
just no way – OK maybe  
I could be wrong

I know  
what I'm talking about – Well  
I could be wrong

I could be wrong  
I could be wrong  
I could be wrong

click your heels  
three times and repeat  
I could be wrong

**Joycelyn** says:

Donald, these are great! I like all of them, especially the first and fourth. I'm going to make a copy and keep it handy. Can I share them?

**poetDonald** says:

Feel free to share them. I used your idea as a prompt, wrote these this morning for my spontaneous haiku, so they are also posted on my Tumblr blog.

**Joycelyn** says:

Thank you!