

The new distrust

BBC World Service 'The Big Idea'

Summary

Take my word for it, today's Big Idea is wary

Wary: not completely trusting or certain about something or someone:

I'm a little wary of/about giving people my address when I don't know them very well

Wariness:

the state or quality of being wary (= not completely trusting or certain):

They eyed each other with wariness and suspicion.

Investor wariness was evident in the company's share price.

More examples

After our initial wariness wears off, we find him entertaining, straightforward, and honest.

Industry experts expressed wariness of the report and its implications.

She saw pain as well as confusion and a certain hard wariness in his eyes.

Cambridge dictionary

The decline of trustworthiness

What is trust?

Trust is a judgement that someone else can be relied upon or that some institution can be relied on. It isn't proof. Trust is what we do when we need a shortcut.

Why is it so important?

There isn't time in this life to go and to get complete evidence and a proof for everything. We often have to rely on other people, so we have to have quick and reasonable ways of judging, whether they can be relied on for a particular purpose.

So it lubricates life, it makes life easier, quicker, easier quicker friendlier, all sorts of good things.

But the down side is, if you misplace trust, if you place trust in somebody who is untrustworthy.

There is a distinction between trust and trustworthiness

Society can't function efficiently without trust.

So, does that mean the more trust the better?

If you simply place trust indiscriminately without making a judgment about whether the other person or institution is trustworthy.

Trusting to luck is not a virtue.

We do not need more trust but we need more Trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness is what the person or institution that I am trying to assess has or lacks.

An individual or organisation is trustworthy if they can be justifiably be trusted.

Trustworthiness: three ingredients

- **Honesty**
- **Competence:** e.g. you do want a competent dentist
- **Reliability**

Reliable: that is be honest and competent each time

We often have to judge institutions ... which are very complex.

Because it is so complex

Form filling, ticking boxes

It takes me longer to do the paperwork than to deliver the baby.

Doing the paperwork is meant to make you more trustworthy!

When you don't know where the message came from.

Trustworthiness: ***the paperwork is only the evidence of reliability***

Many people think doing the paperwork make you trustworthy

Placing trust is extremely demanding, things which are institutionally extremely complex

We now live in a new world

We live now in a world where the source is often

You place your trust in something you hear repeatedly

It takes me longer to do the paperwork than deliver the baby

Malpractice

Harm to the public space

It is fake news and the BBC should not be hostile to it.

People find it very hard to tell what is plausible

People find it very hard to what is plausible

The harm caused to democracy

We should place more trust in people with proven competence

That is what anonymous information does.

Check and balance

A echo chamber can facilitate the poorly placed trust. It may lead you place your trust

Some people will be quite sceptically

First-hand knowledge.

We live in a world where the source is often mysteries.

Tell what is plausible

Information is increasable unsourced and unreliable

We should place more trust in proven experts

Justifiably adverb

in a way for which there is a good reason:

He was justifiably proud of his achievements.

People are justifiably angry.

See justifiable

More examples

They are justifiably worried about the slowdown in the economy.

The police were justifiably criticized in the case.

She is justifiably concerned about the state of the country.

Cambridge Dictionary

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