



Life of Brian (Terry Jones, United Kingdom 1979)

Brian is born in a Judean manger almost at the same time as Jesus. Due to this coincidence, the Magi from the East, guided by a star and believing that this child is the promised Messiah, come to pay him honor and give him gifts. After a few moments of confusion, however, the honor and the gifts are transferred to his neighbor, another newborn named Jesus.

Objectivity and Playing Things Down

A good friend of ours says that in order to come up with the solution to a difficulty, the first essential step is to play things down.

When we face a situation that needs to be solved, how often are we surprised by our own "inability" to distance ourselves from the problem? If we could only look at it from a distance! Instead we tend to construct our own –and sometimes somewhat twisted- set of reasons that feed and justify our frustration.

It's happened to all of us. When facing a difficulty we become blocked, overly anguished or stressed. And yet, when we explain our concern to someone, we are surprised that our interlocutor doesn't see the problem.

Since it is easy to fall into an ocean of self-pity, we need to be attentive to the reaction of our interlocutor, learn how to read the interrogative expression on their face, and receive positively a comment or question that challenges our point of view. Maybe that's the way a magical moment occurs that will result in "Eureka!" What we do when we explain our concerns to someone is that we end up *moving outside* of the problem, seeing it from a distance and, abracadabra, finding the solution. It's turning to someone who has "elephant ears" when we talk.

We heartily invite you to watch this hilarious scene from this fascinating movie and notice to what extent we can justify an obsession, even when stubborn reality contradicts us time and time again. The protagonist vehemently tries to provoke an uprising against the Romans. As he defends his case, arguments that seem to dethrone the need of such an uprising are presented, arguments that he insistently ignores.

As the proverb says, "there are none so blind as those who will not see". And we add a nuance that makes the situation more complex, which is: "there are none so blind as those who want to manipulate." Careful with the latter!!

We need to clearly understand what we need to solve or decide, and try to always base ourselves on facts. But we also know that facts are subject to interpretation and can be manipulated –even by ourselves. For this reason we need to consider them with objectivity and play things down so we can reach pragmatic conclusions.

This is the way to avoid a certain degree of anguish, frustration and stress. Sometimes the answers to our doubts are simple and obvious; let's not go overboard with them.

Enjoy the simple and the obvious. Life is complicated enough as it is! And a happy return to a post-Easter Week reality! Ah! And don't forget the last song of the film. It can be very helpful on this return journey.