

KINDLING\*

# The ACID Test

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J O N C O H E N

# Asking For Trouble



Understanding  
what people *think* when  
you can't trust what they *say*

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**Response isn't real**

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**In the world of asking, the truth is not given, it is composed. And you are the composer.**



If the soul is impartial in receiving information, it devotes to that information the share of critical investigation the information deserves, and its truth or untruth thus becomes clear. However, if the soul is infected with partisanship for a particular opinion or sect, it accepts without a moment's hesitation the information that is agreeable to it. Prejudice and partisanship obscure the critical faculty and preclude critical investigation. The result is that falsehoods are accepted and transmitted.

*Ibn Khaldun*



**Our motivations for asking  
define our boundaries for  
listening. They determine  
who we ask, how we ask,  
what we ask and what we do.**

## **Composition bias**

**1. Affirmation**

**2. Confidence**

**3. Insight**

**4. Decision**

**Step 1: Your approach to asking**

**Step 2: The questions you ask**

**Step 3: Your ability to listen**

**Step 4: The illusions you succumb to**

**Step 5: Your interpretation of response**

**Step 6: The decisions you take**





The best researchers have a calm soul. They listen without agenda. They hear without their own needs or the needs of their clients clouding their mind.

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**Be honest  
with yourself**

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**Next time you ask,  
take the ACID test.**



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**\*Great ideas  
need kindling**