

Despite having evidence that contradicts someone's belief, why can't they come to believe something new?

<https://www.quora.com/Psychology/Despite-having-evidence-that-contradicts-someones-belief-why-cant-they-come-to-believe-something-new/answer/John-Ringland>

In answer to the question "**Despite having evidence that contradicts someone's belief, why can't they come to believe something new?**", here are some links to some general contributing factors:

- [Escalation of commitment](#)
- [System justification](#)
- [Status quo bias](#)
- [Simmelweis reflex](#)
- [Selective perception](#)
- [Confirmation bias](#)
- [Backfire effect](#)
- [Bandwagon effect](#)
- [Conservatism\(belief revision\)](#)
- [Illusory truth effect](#)
- [Mere-exposure effect](#)
- [Attentional bias](#)
- [In-group favoritism](#)
- [Lock-in \(decision-making\)](#)
- [Dunning–Kruger effect](#)

These are ordered according my cursory assessment of their likely relevance to the question. Some of these are not directly relevant and thus require generalisation to see how they might apply.

Here is a related quote in regards to quantum mechanics and the lack of acceptance of the irrefutable evidence against classical objectivism or naive realism, which is still not properly assimilated. This specific instance can be generalised to explain another contributing factor (cognitive repression) to why people are unable to believe something new despite evidence that contradicts their existing beliefs.

"After more than 50 years (now over 80 years) of unquestionable success as a theory, questions about the interpretation of quantum mechanics continue to plague both physicists and philosophers. It is argued here that discussions about the meaning of quantum mechanics remain stymied as a result of the failure of physicists to formulate a cognitive paradigm adequate to their theory. The conventional interpretations which they offer can be seen as inadequate in one of two ways — implicitly, they retain one or the other of the two basic tenets of classical physics, the objectivity or the knowability of nature. This, it is argued, can be viewed as a form of cognitive repression of knowledge acquired, but not yet assimilated. A psychological explanation for the persistence of classical beliefs is proposed...

Piaget has invited the comparison between the historical development of scientific

thought and the cognitive development of the child. Both, it is suggested, proceed through the emergence of discrete stages of structural organization, each stage brings with it new possibilities of conceptual integration, and concurrently, the possibility of a verbal articulation of the new level of organization perceived. Prior to the establishment of a new conceptual structure, knowledge already present in nonverbal forms (in e.g., sensorimotor rather than representation schemes) finds no avenue of expression, and, to the extent that it jars with the earlier established structures, demands cognitive repression. Piaget [1] tells us that an action schema which "cannot be integrated into the system of conscious concepts is eliminated... (and) repressed from conscious territory before it has penetrated there in any conceptualized form." Caught in a transition between stages, the child, when pressed to articulate perceptions requiring cognitive structures which are not yet available, displays confusion, denial and avoidance - a disequilibrium strikingly reminiscent of the mechanism of affective repression." (Evelyn Fox Keller, [Cognitive repression in contemporary physics](#))

"There exists a cognitive repression of the interpretation problem by the majority of physicists. For that majority the questions concerning the meaning of quantum mechanics are answered once and for all by the Copenhagen interpretation, and all further inquiry is rejected as a sign that the inquirer does not understand the topic. Further questions are called "only philosophical" and thus not befitting a physicist. But if one inquires in depth what the Copenhagen interpretation says one gets a variety of different answers. According to Fox-Keller this, too, is a sign for evasion, whereby what is evaded is the necessity of a new cognitive structure which differs radically from the existing one. Fox-Keller calls the old structure classical objectivism. To her, the confusion concerning the interpretation of quantum mechanics exists, thus, in the attempt to retain one or more components of the classical position." (Anton Zeilinger, [On the Interpretation and Philosophical Foundation of Quantum Mechanics](#))

In answer to the question details: that is probably an entirely different question with a much different answer that is not really about evidence or belief but about other personal / social / emotional / sexual issues. For example, maybe she is lesbian and yet to "come out" or maybe she has PTSD due to early childhood abuse from a man or maybe she has a secret life that you don't know about or who knows what it may be, I am not in a position to make an intelligent guess... I'm sorry.

It might be useful to separate this question in two. The question title is fine for the assigned topics, but the question details would get a better response with a different set of topic tags more related to inter-personal, inter-gender, dating issues.