

THE ROAD RUNNER TACTIC

Learn to recognize Self-Defeating Statements
Simply apply the claim to itself
Respectfully show them they have nothing to stand on



1. There is no truth.

- You might respond, "Is *that* true?" or "How can it be true that there is no truth?" If there is no truth this statement itself cannot be true. Therefore, truth exists. You cannot deny truth without affirming it.

2. You can't know truth.

You might respond, "Then how do you know *that*?" If you can't know truth then you would never know that "you can't know truth." This person is claiming to *know the truth* that we *can't know truth*.

3. No one has the truth.

You might respond, "Then how do you know *that* is true?" This person is claiming to *have the truth* that *no one has the truth*. If no one has the truth then the statement "no one has the truth" is false!

4. All truth is relative.

You might respond, "Is *that* a relative truth?" Sometimes also stated as "Everything is relative." If all truth is relative then this statement itself would be relative and not objectively true. In other words, the person is claiming that it is *objectively* true that all truth is *relative*.

5. It's true for you but not for me.

You might respond, "Is *that* just true for you, or is it true for everybody?" This statement is self-refuting because it claims that truth is relative to the individual and yet at the same time implies it is *objectively true* that something can be "true for you but not for me." This statement commits the self-excepting fallacy.

6. There are no absolutes.

You might respond, "Are you *absolutely* sure about that?" This statement is an absolute statement about reality that claims there are no absolutes.

7. No one can know any truth about religion.

You might respond, "Then how did you come to know *that* truth about religion?" This person is claiming to know the truth about religion and it is this: *you can't know truth about religion*.

8. You can't know anything for sure.

You might respond, "Then how do you know *that* for sure?" If you can't know anything for sure then you would never know it! This person is claiming to know with *certainty* that you can't know anything *for sure*.

9. You should doubt everything.

You might respond, "Should I doubt *that*?" If you should doubt everything then you should doubt the truth of the statement "you should doubt everything." And remember: always doubt your doubts!

10. Only science can give us truth.

You might respond, "What science experiment taught you *that*?" or "What is your scientific evidence that only science can give us truth?" If only science can give us truth we could never know that "only science can give us truth" because this is not something science can tell you! That is because this statement is philosophical in nature rather than scientific.

11. You can only know truth through experience.

You might respond, "What experience taught you *that*?" or "Can you know *that* truth through experience?" If you can only know truth through experience you would never know the truth of the statement "you can only know truth through experience" because this is not something that can be known through experience.

12. All truth depends on your perspective.

You might respond, "Does *that* truth depend on your perspective?" If all truth depends on your perspective then even the truth "all truth depends on your perspective" depends on your perspective. This is another *objective* statement which claims *relativism* is true. Again, it commits the self-excepting fallacy.

13. You shouldn't judge.

You might respond, "If it is wrong to judge, then why are you judging?" The person who says this is making a judgment, namely, that it is wrong to judge!

14. You shouldn't force your morality on people.

You might respond, "Then please don't force your moral view that it is wrong to force morality." This person is forcing *their* moral point of view that it is wrong to force a moral point of view.

15. You should live and let live.

You might respond, "If that's your philosophy, why are you telling me how to live?" The person who tells you to "live and let live" isn't allowing you to live how you want! They are prescribing behavior for you rather than taking their own advice.

16. God doesn't take sides.

You might respond, "Does God take *that* side?" If God doesn't take sides then He *does* in fact take the side that doesn't take sides.

17. You shouldn't try to convert people.

You might respond, "If it is wrong to convert, why are you trying to convert me?" This person is trying to *convert you* to *their* position that it is wrong to convert people!

18. That's just your view.

You might respond, "Well that's just your view that this is just my view." This statement is self-refuting if it treats an *objective* statement as if it were *subjective*. This is the subjectivist fallacy. The hidden assumption is that your view is relative and a matter of personal opinion. If that is the case, this statement can also be relativized and made into a matter of personal opinion.

19. You should be tolerant of all views.

You might respond, "Then why don't you tolerate my view?" Most statements regarding tolerance are self-refuting if by "tolerance" the person means "accepting all views as equally true and valid." If that is the case, the person who says "You should be tolerant of all views" isn't being tolerant of your view!

20. It is arrogant to claim to have the truth.

You might respond, "My that is awfully arrogant of you!" This person is claiming to have the truth that "it is arrogant to claim to have the truth." Therefore, by his own standard, he is the arrogant one!