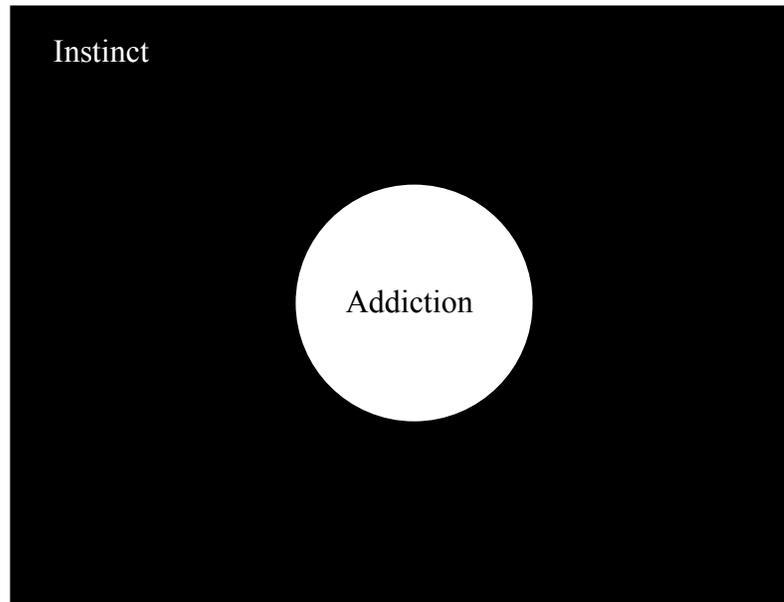


Differentiating addiction from instinct:-



When we think of addiction, very commonly we think of the most obvious kinds: alcohol, food, power, sex, stimulants, TV, internet, the list is endless but all clearly stemming from external things which effect a sensory pleasure-overload process which inevitably will actually produce more pain than pleasure. What we seldom acknowledge is the addiction to the state of “self” and its seeming “separateness” which is in fact the foundation of all addictions - the idea/ideal of self-image. Interestingly, however, underpinning all these addictions are actually instincts, simply our natural responses coming from a “no-self” expression, the intrinsic basis of the human-animal. Intellectuals and those who see the head as being the primary region of our “human dignity” will be dismayed and dismissive of the notion that the human being is no more than just a head in a box. While the brain and upper body do represent intelligence of a certain kind there is also innate intelligence held within the rest of the body which is the foundation of the upper processes. When we see the brain as “controller” we are literally putting the cart before the horse. It is the bodyspirit being which actually underpins the mind. What this tells us is that addiction is a manifestation of the head and of the idea of “self” entangled therein, which affects the body and is associated with emotion of somatic pain connected with particular thoughts. This is when body and mind are “attempting” detachment and not connecting as one whole.

Instinct is the same as intuition or gut-feeling, it is the 6th sense that encapsulates and is all senses. It has no possibility to be “used” or “directed” or “intended” or manipulated in any way shape or form although there is much in the self-development world that suggests otherwise. Instinct is spontaneous and without reason. There is a misapprehension that instinct is somehow basic, therefore dangerous and unintelligible. It

is in fact deeply intelligent and inclusive of cognitive processes but these processes are like the hair on the head in relation to the whole body. Truly instinctual actions are totally non-violent, unhampered by judgment and in totally connected aliveness with everything. The add-on process of the mental-emotional which is founded in the upper portion of the body (please see the article called “The Diagram” for more on this) is something which causes resistance and tensions in the bodyspirit organism and within this there is a short-circuiting or looping which creates the idea of separation and the contracted behavior of addiction.

The key differentiation between instinct and addiction is that addiction is founded on an ideal and instinct is not. Addiction is founded on the primary assumption that there is a separate “self” which cannot be made whole, resulting in a sense of constant inadequacy, deficiency, discomfort, irritation, fear and boundless sufferance. Addictions manifest as displacement activities, blockers, counter-measures and avoidance of recognising the true nature of this suffering *as it is*. Indeed, why would the “self” wish to confront its ultimate mirror, that in truth it is a mere illusion. At root the “self” knows it originates from the same source as everything else. The dream wants to continue and does so until it doesn’t, there is a ripening process occurring here and no specifically intended process devised by “self” can adjust/prevent this.

The inevitable struggle and sufferance of the idea of “separation” is always at the root of all dis-ease and therefore by its nature, addiction. Although instinct is constantly present, responding to natural expressions of breathing, heartbeat, hunger, thirst, senses, sexual responses, urination and defecation responses and so on, addiction will attempt to hijack all these responses and turn them all into “problems”. Constipation and urination are blocked causing dysfunction, heart rate will usually increase, breathing can become stifled, sexual energy can be focused on, drained, over-stimulated or shut down completely, hunger can increase way beyond real hunger instead manifesting either as “senseless” eating, or conversely “controlled” eating.

So as we can see addictions derive from a desire for, or are the focus of pleasure stimulation. However, this “pleasure” will only ever be superficial and ephemeral and at the deepest level will neither be desirable nor useful. Addiction originates in the premise of separation, whereas instinct is direct, without cause. It is natural to feel a desire for sex and to be close to people, it is natural to be hungry and thirsty, these are all fundamentally human. However when there is a perception of a separate-“self” this wreaks havoc with the senses and connections to reality. The body’s energy is no longer distributed down to the feet and legs but is stuck in the head and upper body. This produces a strong looping or “Catch 22” effect within the psyche.

The process of healing is all about relief from judgment of the addiction itself and the simple realization that all addictions of any kind have always existed throughout human history, there is “no-one” to blame, “no-one” who can choose. It is in a way both impersonal while also being deeply intimate. Understanding that the separate “self” at the root of addiction is in fact an illusion, allows the realisation that no “self” actually owns

this imaginary “self-image”, so in fact there can be no “addict” to be addicted. This is the head and upper body cut off from the lower body, earth and senses.

The nature of reality is very much more simple than we imagine. The difficulty lies in the revelation that to “do” something to “change” this is not something cognitive, imagined/intended but is the relief of a sensitivity to being “lived through” by all of the universe. As this inevitably arises, at death if not before, there is a total letting-go of striving and seeking, in order “to be” or “to get” what one needs to be whole, as wholeness is implicit.

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