

The fragile adult and invulnerable infant: clarifying misconceptions about the origin of suffering.

Most of the time in therapeutic situations there is a pre-occupation with therapists taking on the history of a patient. The focus is mainly on what has happened in the past to get to where you are today. There seems like a logical process of cause and effect and so the therapist, who assumes they are working at a “root” level, tries to unearth or “dig” into the past, be it the past in this life-time or the belief in previous ones, to try to find the causality of the situation at hand.

Currently making headlines is the situation of birth-related trauma being the causal fact, i.e. of “not coming into the world correctly”. Instead we will leave aside the hugely problematic belief system of karma and its consequences, of which I have spoken in other articles, and focus purely on the infant and the effect of situations of trauma on the pre-natal and new-born. The infant is a situation of non dis-ease, no matter if there is disfigurement or handicap of any kind, or if the baby has a blood-related illness from the mother or any hereditary illness. It is not in a state of dis-ease, but of acceptance and peace, irrespective of any “problems” when it is born. No matter what forms of violence or abuse may happen pre-birth or situations of aggression or intolerance the baby is born into, it is in a state of total acceptance, non-judgmental, constantly in-love with whatever *is*. Of course it feels pain and discomfort and will express these things immediately and fully without hesitation. The baby is an expression that is totally unlike the ideas of the human adult and those of the world it comes into. In fact the whole expression of the human adult’s ideology which they then apply to the baby is a deep form of anthropomorphism, this time of human-adult projecting onto human-animal. The baby is a human-animal, it lives from its body being the prime expression and the head being the secondary feature, not the other way around as most adult humans will exhibit.

As such the whole idea of infant nature is deeply unrecognized, especially by those involved in natal and pre-natal psychology, due to the fact that so often the ideas of being an adult are applied to the infant. Alison Gopnik is a behaviorist who sees things the other way around and has a greater insight into the human mind as she recognises the profundity of the infant mind, not its seeming weakness in comparison to the adult’s. <http://www.alisongopnik.com/> The nature of the human infant is ultimately supremely adaptable. It is true that the physical body of the infant is much smaller and weaker than that of the human adult, yet the nature of the fact that it has a pre-developed mind is actually a very powerful way of adapting and also it has no concept or sense of “self”. This is a “bliss” state, no matter what problems are occurring. There is no “I” or “self” that is suffering the situation, no presence of a “person” to whom “bad” things or “good” things are happening. These concepts mean nothing. All that is occurring is wild-nature. The baby is wild, just as animals are wild and it is when the process of taming the baby into the “person” begin that individuation and so the foundation of dis-ease take hold.

The critical time for children is around the ages or 3-5 onwards, depending on the specific nature of the child, if a traumatic event happens at this time then this may trigger a sense of separation, forming a “self” or 3rd person perspective of “me” which often

come to light later in situations of child abuse cases, where a person begins to believe in the idea that “I” am a victim of trauma or abuse, and there is a clear differentiation between the attacked and the one who is attacking. Once initiated at this early age all further situations in life can become increasingly traumatic until this original perception of “I am” falls apart due to life events with opposite energetic quality occurring and shattering the perception of “self”, or the suffering become so bad that it finally collapses under its own weight. The trauma is “healed” at the point of realising that the self or story of “me” actually don’t exist and that the “me” itself is only an image.

The main problem with this for most people is that they are confident that the “I” or “self” is a very real and tangible thing, so anyone who says differently is not a complete person or is unable to feel deeply enough to contact “themselves”, but this ideology is fundamentally based in fear. There are many ways in which the human adult can try to prevent themselves coming in contact with reality but in order to really and truly experiment on what one knows about self, please look at the work of Douglas Harding: <http://www.headless.org>. Once these things are looked at there begins a process of true uncertainty, where there really isn’t anything one can do about being uncertain. The uncertainty in itself is the ending of the process of the “self”, instead of trying to control and construct life there is an allowance for life to be lived “through-me” not because of “me”.

In any case, the nature of the child at an early age is very much an adaptable expression, it has far more ability at this stage to let go and move quickly from a situation of trauma to one of openness and clarity at the drop of a hat. As time goes on and we enter pre-teens, teenage and then hit twenties and thirties and onwards there is a gradual contraction and rigidifying of the mental and emotional facilities. Slowly things stop moving and the idea becomes clear to us that the past formed “me” so it is the past “I” must re-visit in order to unearth what “I” am, to resolve this by “understanding” and clarifying what “should” have happened and now try to bolster what “should” have happened in the present to make up the difference. However, no matter how many details of the past are uncovered more remain, if we go back and back and back it’s always someone’s fault or there’s always a reason by which we can claim victimhood at whatever level.

The point is that there is no such thing as a person who can *be* a victim, or an aggressor, no person actually exists, which is why the whole notion of the story of “myself” is based on a notion or a feeling-based premise that I am separated-off and am an individual. What is constantly misunderstood is that actually it is the adult who is the most fragile. In children’s hospitals staff and doctors are keenly aware that very often it is the psychological needs of the parents of sick children which have to be met as a primary, basically because the children recover or do not, with ease in either direction. There is little or no suffering. For the parent however, the lack of meaning and reason for things and the problem of seeing “my” baby in discomfort causes suffering beyond measuring, therefore in fact it is the adult who is suffering. This notion goes all the way through psychology. We all want to “save the children” but actually it is the children who have the nature to “save” the adult. The adult’s rigidity of mind is so weak and yet so

forthright and this is the basis of the dis-ease state. Illness or necrosis of the body tissues involving pain is very different to dis-ease, which is sufferance, and this is what is not understood by the human adult's mind. The impersonal nature of pain just as pain, as an attacker, as simply an energy force, not as something which is personally attacking "me", is almost unimaginable to the adult mind which has to see things as personal.

The nature of life has the paradox of being both deeply intimate and absolutely impersonal together. For the human adult the dis-ease of the female/yin quality will generally have greatest difficulty with the impersonal, everything is intimately felt to be about "myself". In the dis-ease of the male/yang everything will seem impersonal and not at all intimate, as if things are at a distance happening to someone else, not "me". The situation without dis-ease is when the two qualities are realized to be seamless, intimate and impersonal, which is simply unconditional love.

The infant is the enlightened-quality, so to speak, the One we all already are at heart, it is an expression of nature and of unconditional love. As Tony Parsons constantly points to (<http://www.theopensecret.com>) unconditional love is something that really is unconditional. It includes both warmth and tenderness, total tyranny, violence and aggression. When all is seen and accepted this can be called peace. This is not about trying to change things for the better or trying to "build a better world" but rather it is a realization of the uncertainty that "I knows" anything, rather that when a letting-go naturally occurs all that is then revealed is what was always there, a world underneath the one of individuated "selves" we experience, which contains No-one. This is the place the infant can lead us to. When we start to blend with the infant's way instead of being its master, this is the return home, to the place we never left.

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