

Bulimic breakthrough: the genius of the body's natural response to controlled starvation

The following article is about the nature of the energetics of the anorexic-bulimic psychological pattern. I will use generalized terms in order to try and portray an expression of why the "binge" aspect of eating disorders has significant importance and why, although often seen as a disorder, the "binge" itself is nature's voice.

There are many forms of eating disorders and just like any other psychological control of the physiology they are always head and not body based. There is really no such thing as an eating disorder that is physiologically based, if there were it would not be an "eating disorder" but more a "digestive/ingestive/ metabolic disorder". The term "eating disorder" implies the mind or "self" as the primary basis that is somehow misaligned with the body's requirements. It is in essence a self-induced control of the physiological processes of the body... "mind over matter" if you will.

As with all similar attempts to do this, it is a form of asceticism. For some religious sects the starvation or flagellation of the body, or attempts to control the body through suffering, are all in order to "get somewhere". For all those people who practise starving the body and just meditating, or who torture the body and attempt to overcome pain, or who are controlling eating in order not to "look fat", there is really no difference at all, even though of course we are told otherwise. The ascetic is looking for enlightenment, the anorexic-bulimic person is looking for "beauty" or rather "acceptance" but in fact both are goals that have an image of what it would be like if at some time in the future they "got there".

All of this is the same, therefore it doesn't matter how one attempts to control the physiological process of the body, whether it takes the form of controlled breathing, controlled sexuality, controlled eating, controlled walking or standing, all of these are a form of *violence*. This is from the Tao Te Ching:-

Chapter 55

One who realizes Innate-potency is like a new-born infant,

Poisonous insects cannot sting Innate-potency

Predatory animals cannot pounce on Innate-potency

Birds of prey cannot swoop down on Innate-potency.

An Infant's bones are soft, its sinews supple, its grip is firm

It does not know the sexual union of male and female

Yet there is strength of its creative-sexual energy within

Virility is at its height.

This is how the infant can cry all day yet does not become hoarse

This is called: in-harmony with life.

Knowing harmony is called constancy

Knowing constancy is called clarity.

Attempting to add to virility is called "madness"

Mentally controlling or directing the breath is called "violence"

That which is in the prime of life, attacking the weak and old

This is called: madness that cannot perceive Naturalness

That which cannot perceive Naturalness comes to an early transformation.

The chapter points out simply the process of counter-flow of what is natural. So anything that goes counter-flow to the movement of nature is obviously resisting it therefore all forms of mental control over the body fall into this category, no matter how “holy”, “wise” or so-called “pure” we are told they are; they are in fact all a form of violence on nature which *is* the body that is presently reading these words. This body is not “yours” and the “you” has no rights to it. Any control placed on it is a form of colonial madness that is an aberration to indigenous nature, it will definitely cause suffering and physical pain and moves the body faster towards physical death, as death is when the body energy has been used up. If it is early death then the loss is often through the process of resistance. So nature finally gets a reprieve of the tension through physical death.

So back to the eating disorders... it is clear that the anorexia and bulimic-episodes are two sides of one coin. Let's call the anorexia a yang-controlling and aggressive element and the bulimic state a yin and uncontrolled state. The anorexia is based in the idea that control/tightness/inwardness/holding oneself “in” a “tightened” state is “good”. This stems from an idea that begins unusually early on in life that to be more masculinated in one's looks, which often means to be “slim” and tight and more controlled, will be attractive and is what is “wanted” by society. It can be to be controlled in very seemingly uncontrollable situations; food becomes the only possible arena of control, i.e. control of “myself”. Also there is the element of being “elegant”, not clumsy and overweight, and a fear has been driven into this that somehow more body mass and a movement towards having more flesh is “bad” or “ugly”. This often drives the anorexic tightness. Anorexia is the starvation of the body, the held-in-ness. It is also directly the power of the strength of the mind/ “self”. If a person has a very strong willful “me” they can continue the control of the physiology right up until clinical death. It is this powerful mental state of contraction into the perception of a “me” that is “bad” or “overweight” that is really the issue here. However, control of the physiology for many people is not entirely possible, very often the most problematic patients for health are those who have a pure-anorexia, which is basically total control over the body and essentially if this pattern doesn't break open it leads directly to death.

Many women and growing numbers of men who have what is clinically called “body dimorphic syndrome” see themselves in a way that is completely contrary to what they are externally. Of course everyone has this problem but not usually to the extent of the anorexic person. The anorexic person is living within a box of “myself”, they often see themselves as a “bad” person who needs to be trained to be “good” through their own direction. This good-bad dualism was put in place some time in early childhood, often by parents passing on this kind of body-based control, thereby often unwittingly creating total disarray in the child's mind.

For example a child is told they are “good” when they do A and “bad” when they do B. Then to really mess things up they are rewarded with a sweet food when they are “good” and not allowed sweets when they are “bad”. And here is the kicker, usually later into their teens or even sometimes earlier, they are also told that sweets are “bad for you” and have “too many calories” and will make you “fat” which is “bad”, and so this ties the person's whole world up in knots.

Fundamentally when treating or engaging with a person with anorexic-bulimic patterns the eating-disorder is actually irrelevant, the origin and basis of their problem is to be found in the whole idea that there was ever anything which was good or bad. There has been loads of nonsensical advice, food lists and ideologies built up around eating disorders but all of it is irrelevant. The first thing to understand is that the eating disorder is not a bodily-based issue, so one can forget focusing on it as a form of malnutrition and seeking dietary advice is totally useless. Trying to manage the problem by using psychological techniques such as CBT and NLP and other modern methods of goal-setting which do not look at the origin of the problem is also useless as they do not help long-term.

The basis of the conversation has to be about a person coming into their senses and also being aware that there is no such thing as good and bad.

For a pure anorexic person, someone who is constantly on a starvation diet and can't sustain this, which is essentially the most dangerous kind for the person's bodily health, the best thing is if they begin to "binge" eat. Of course this sounds ridiculous...why would this be better? The nature of anorexia is super-controlled so a move towards bingeing means that a person is losing control. It also means that the feeling of guilt at doing this is very strong and so the rectification for this is to induce vomiting after a binge...but at the very least it is in the direction of LESS control and this is where we begin to see cracks in the ideology of "me".

Bulimia is the other side of the anorexic coin, it is a situation where a person binge and then very often feels guilty and self-induces vomiting to get rid of what they ate. Bulimia is a situation that is far less controlled than anorexia, it is actually a state where a person is drawn to binge-eat as a result of self-restriction. Anorexia is pure self-restriction so the binge itself in bulimia is something that is a powerful force of chaos. Many bulimic patients point out that the binge is pure freedom, it's a situation where they are no longer restricted and can "do whatever they want" ...this is why the binge is the most natural aspect of the situation.

When many people's emotional states are held-in and in a conformity to social pressures the most natural aspect of their expression is anger. It's the emotion that wants to release tension and come out of the body, in a way it is the most "natural" expression within a very unnatural state of self-control. The same with the binge, it is a kind of anarchy, an attempt to break down the barriers and let go, so the binge is actually the most natural thing. When there isn't so much bingeing but there is a lot of control being placed, this situation is bound to get more and more tense until something gives way, either a person will binge or will collapse...the physiology will out in the end.

So it is from the binge and the ensuing guilt that a patient comes into contact with the duality of the physiological and psychological. When there is a lot of strong emotion or difficulties in the environment, the psychology that relies on everything being steadily controlled starts to be affected and no longer has as much control, then the child-nature breaks through the conformity and binge. It can be like a person who is starving, so they will eat everything in sight way beyond the actual feeling of fullness. People in a bulimic state can easily eat until they are physically sick. So the binge quantity is always equal and opposite to the amount of control. The amount of control

of life and food in general will create an equal and opposite counter-reaction in the body: the binge.

So there is a spectrum in between the super-control of anorexia to the super-chaotic binging state of a bulimic episode which most people will fall into within this pathology. The movement towards the Bulimic-binging is usually seen as just another disorder but actually it is the body physiology taking over, it is the revolution energy or the chaotic energy in the body breaking out. So although the binging and vomiting are really damaging to the body, as well the psychology involved which is at the heart of all of this, it is not as powerfully strong as with pure anorexic starvation which is essentially a very deep illusionary pit.

As we go into this deeper and deeper the basis of all of this is the dualism of good versus bad. When this drops out of the picture then what happens is the power of control is reduced as there is no benefit in the control, there is no looking “good” or “bad” there is just what there is and there is no judgment placed. Also there is no food that is good or bad, nothing to do that is right or wrong, no heaven and no hell. The fundamental illusion of dualism is within all of this and as a result the whole ideology crumbles once good and bad are taken out of the picture. This however requires a therapist or the person in a caring position not to have a process of judgment themselves. This is because very often the problems encountered with this pattern clinically are exaggerated by practitioners where the processes of guidance are towards social acceptability, goal and “weight” targets, or even more commonly the therapist’s own goals and judgments which inevitably will be felt by the patient and form a continuation of the logic of good and bad.

The worst situation for a person with this pattern to be involved in is anything to do with nutrition and nutritional medicine as all that is almost entirely dualistically arranged. There should be no education about food or about choices made about food, no lists, no food diaries, no attempt to manage the situation. The problem is only dealt with if the fundamental pattern that was communicated in early life and is re-playing psychologically via good and bad starts to let go and a person starts to move into their sensory perception of the world. This is all that's necessary, if the illusion of absolute dualism is even partially dislodged the whole house of cards will fall.

The problem is that there is so much identification with the state of “me” having a “good” and “bad” and the old ways of being, that it takes time to shrug this off. However, gradually as it is recognized that nothing has the innate property of good and bad, so this allows one to re-examine the whole world and the whole way humans behave. In everything from food to sexuality to breathing to walking to movement, there is always someone who wants to provide a judgment, a “method” by which to do this better, when in fact there is no “better”. All there is, is just what there is right this moment in the senses.

Eventually **the senses crowd-out everything else**, they are all there is, there is no room for psychology, just physiology. For the person with an eating disorder this is an open secret of the realization that all the processes occurring are about the “self” attempting to control nature and placing good and bad idealism on it. The nature of anorexic-bulimic tendency is the dis-ease of moralism, directly inside the body. The book of morality was written without any understanding or recognition of the natural

state. As this breaks down so there becomes a sensory being, without the add-on of the “me” attempting to fix or interrupt its natural flow, there is simply sense and response. Food is just eaten and responded to directly, what one likes one eats until one is full then one stops and that's it. But this is only experienced when no food is seen as good or bad, it's all-available, one can have anything, so the big question is ...*what is it that you actually want?*

This is not a “want” that comes from the addictive binge that is about breaking out of the tightness of being “good”, this comes from a sensitivity of “what I actually want”. Until a person stops the boom-bust idealism of anorexia-bulimia there is no way they can actually sense what they want and what they like, as they have never done this. It is all a calculated process of 1 good equals 1 bad and 2 bads equal 1 good. When nothing has the good-bad dualism in it, none of this psychology has any power.

The argument often goes... *“but then I'd eat chocolate all day and get really fat!”* which is the same argument that the politician gives when talking about what he believes an anarchic state will be, where *“people will just go around killing each other”*. Why do we believe that if there are no imposed rules things won't just happen naturally? Nature has no rules yet is in perfect harmony. The body has no rules at night in order to sleep, no rules in order to defecate, for the heart to beat, or to breathe... there are no rules in any of these things, no attempts to control, they are the foundations of life. Yet everything else needs to have rules attached to it, even the process of breath and movement can be tampered with in so-called meditative activities.

None of the above is an attempt to “help”, what I am doing is to merely open up the discussion of what's going on at the root of these eating disorders and point out that no pattern of addiction ever goes away by attempting to look at the addiction itself, this is utterly pointless and is deeply symptomatic. The real basis of all addictions is in the judgment and dualism of the “self” which sees double, when actually all there is, is one-energy that is life. When something has no polar nature and that is seen to be illusory, then there is a possibility of the psychology folding and the natural expression is able to allow a person to recover. Once this occurs often an anorexic or bulimic person will need several years of recovery in order to re-form the body to its former state and for natural-eating based on instinctive responses to come back in.

The problem of the person with an eating disorder is the problem of the world, it is often based on the external judgment of a person by others and living life as if we are bound to their perception of us. Big-Brother or the outside observer only gains control when we ourselves become this, we ourselves become the watchers and the observers of our own functions as if detached and watching a scientific experiment. Much like the clarity of George Orwell's “Nineteen Eighty-Four” and “Animal Farm” there is such lucidity of the world we have created of living life being paranoid about being watched and listened to and judged based on societal rules. We are all afraid of this. Yet the power of this only takes hold if we listen to this as a reality rather than a pathology.

If we are told that we look “fat” or “thin” or “pale” or “healthy” how are we to know, how are we to know that we are good or bad? How do we know if we are right or wrong? There is nothing within us that tells us this, no compass that tells us right from

wrong, there is no “moral-compass” or “compass of judgment”. There is only a “compass” of nature which points truth-north at all times. The social controllers and those who believe themselves to be “in-power” suggest they have the authority over life and death, imprisonment or freedom, but they have no such control. One can be utterly free in a prison or conversely totally restricted being “free”. Walls are not the issue here. The problem is when we let go of the sense within and defer to an external influence who supposedly “knows better”, be it a doctor, teacher, guru, friend, partner or family member, none of whom in fact “know”. It is really only when the senses within one ignite that this becomes completely clear, enabling one to see, feel and respond to things directly without any attempt to be “shown” what to do.

In his brilliant collection of essays (see <http://www.headless.org>) and in his book “Look for Yourself”, Douglas Harding offers the suggestion that rather than seeking out strange new ways of learning and experiencing the world and instead of taking things on the authority of others as to whether something is “right or “wrong”, one should reclaim the wisdom of the child-animal-state and start being one’s own authority, start looking for yourself. If we are told this is good or bad...what actually is it? If it is a foodstuff it has an effect, it is energy, but it has no good or bad. The same with people, they are just people and “one person’s meat is another person’s poison”, just as “one person’s lover is another person’s battle-axe!” The point is that there is no authority that works above your own sense. No one can give it to you or mend it, for it was never broken, no one can even reveal it and claim responsibility for this, as it is not re-discovered through any action taken but actually when no-action is taken to find it. Nature is always in the background of the “self” and it is always “in-control” whereas “you” are not.

The fewer attempts there are to control, the easier life becomes. There is no better or worse but just a direction taken because the senses want this or that. There are wants or needs but they do not attempt to make “better”, they are just the body moving, the nature of the energy moving, just a direction to go where it’s sunny because you like the sun or find shelter from a storm if you don't like the wet. It's a response to what is there and nothing else.

In the process of grappling with food, sexuality, breath and movement because these are so basic to human nature, one eventually finds that attempting to control any of these things is utterly futile and then there is a realization of the return to the natural state of non-duality, or the simplicity of the child living in an Eden of Instinct.

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