

Relieving tension: Seeing past the duality of taboo and judgment in the use of drugs and addictive behaviour.

Everyone is an addict. It needn't necessarily be an addiction to the drugs we told are "bad" for us, it can be anything from food, to work, to sex or watching soap operas and fundamental to all of this it is the "self" itself, the "me" which is the biggest addiction of almost everyone. Even the word addiction can make people take a step back, not wanting to associate themselves with druggies, alcoholics and the so-called "low-lives" but in fact we are all the same, just using different drugs.

One drug I see commonly used in the health arena is the use of "meditation" as a status symbol of the conceptualization of health and attaining spiritual enlightenment or even a "healthy body". While this may superficially appear "beneficial", most often it is simply a transference of one addiction of "me" being "bad" and "non-spiritual/ non-enlightened" to another addiction of "me" being "good" and "spiritual/ getting to enlightenment". This results in bolstering one position of "me", which then causes a huge tensional polarity that eventually busts open with binge-something. It is rare to find people who are simply doing what they are doing, not in order to be healthy but simply because they like it, they are within a sensitive feeling of what feels okay for the body right at this moment. Children are like this. However, there still exists a parent-teacher mentality of being the "good boy" or "good girl", and the expression of this of course inspires the direct and dual opposite of tension-relief i.e. the "bad-boy/ bad-girl" type expression. This dualism within us is very much that of the angel/devil, this is Heaven vs. Hell. In fact dualism is all hell, there's no Heaven. Heaven or Eden is outside of dualism, when good and evil and judgment end, or are seen to be the same thing, and then there is the realization of Oneness.

Almost all drugs and addictive behaviours have one singular similarity and that is tension relief, even though this occurs through what are deemed to be "self-destructive" methods. Each use of a drug is in order to dispel the tension from within the body. When a drug applied, by whatever means, and hits the bloodstream there is an immediate initial effect. If the drug is an "upper" or "cathartic" which stimulates the body to express its inner tension through increased activity or movement, so it speeds things up and acts as a cathartic release in a similar way to exercise. Many of these drugs are "party-drugs" including ecstasy, speed, cocaine etc. and even coffee! They increase a "confident" energy and increase movement and activity. They seem to have an upward and outward effect and might be considered like a spice, they generally create faster responses and promote a "wired" effect increasing heart rate and adrenal responses. They are pushing out or expanding the problem of felt tension or angst or something hidden deep within, the drug pushes this energy to the surface and so the person can have some kind of respite from the internal tension as it finally moves outwards for a while and the stagnation has stopped.

The other kind of drug is the "downer" or "sedative" which calms and soothes, in some cases almost to the point of death. There is a similarity in fact with these kind of drug and death. They immediately relax tension and at the same time dilate the blood vessels, everything slows and calms down and people move into an orgasmic-release similar to that of sexual climax or the feeling just after this, where there is a total relaxation of the body and within this process the tension is released for a while. There is generally little ability or even requirement to move around and these drugs

generally sedate people. They include alcohol and marijuana but also other very potent drugs such as ketamine, opium, heroine, barbiturates.

Of course some drugs have a combination of these two qualities, these are just an expressions of a spectrum of drug energetics. Overeating will also induce a dropping of some similar internally-created drug-like effects, as will sex. Even compulsive activities like hand-washing and constant exercise or cutting the skin and causing physical pain and then relief, all of these induce blood flow, or allow a person to go from a state of it's not safe to "it's safe" or "I'm" in control. This feels like a relief so again momentarily there is a feeling of release of tension. Some activities are more cathartic like cutting, others are more sedative such as over-eating. These are the energetics of these processes.

It is clear that when animals are put in cages or restricted in some way numerous functions change about their activity, sometimes it can initially cause a total shut-down and stagnation of energy but usually this can build up to create aggressions, physical-harming and pain-relief, including pulling of feather or fur, and hyper-sexuality and intensive eating. All of these functions are simply situations of animals in a state of tension or restriction where they are unable to move and express freely due to their being enclosed. With the animals there is total acceptance of this, but with the human all these things occur within the contractions of societal cages. Added onto this is the conflict of "good" and "bad", "right" and "wrong", guilt and shame and the spiral of increased tension based on judgment. Addictions are seen as taboo and are hidden, the inner world of "little secrets" about ways of behaviour which are about release, is a world that is fuelled, titillated and latched onto by numerous advertising campaigns for products, drugs or foods that are about "being bad" and also those "healthy" options that are all about "being good to yourself". Both are actually sides of the same coin.

The point is that dualism and fragmentary processes of thinking or expression are basically polar and counter-balance each other, if the mind pulls the body one way you can be sure it will snap back to the so-called "dark" side because humans are "fallible" or rather, as with all animals humans are free by nature so whether you put them in a mental cage or a real cage it makes no difference, the energy will always try to break free.

So the other way one can look at this is not to polarize the issue. Instead of seeing drugs and their use as a "problem" in and of themselves we can simply see them as energetic expression. Why do humans need or require them? The use of drugs is a stroke of genius in many ways, in that they do exactly what the human taking them wants in that moment, but the big question is what's at the root of this that creates the compulsion to want this aggressive kind of release? The bigger the tension the bigger the release required. Society is a manifestation of the original sense of "separation" within every one of its members. This is the foundation from which stem all situations of requirement for addiction, whether it be to money, power, drugs, even music and the party atmosphere and to all manner of so-called "sins". But these are not in fact "sins", they are outlets, pressure release valves for feeling "safe" and so finding relief, feeling "in control" and thereby relief, feeling "calm" and so there is relief, feeling something that allows "me" to drop out of the picture for a moment so at least "I" don't have to "contend", and so there is relief even if only for a moment. The sense of

feeling separate and being cut off and not in a connection with others and nature and everything fades out for a while. In this sense drugs are really one of the most “natural” and important expressions of a society when in the state of dis-ease/ separation that it is in, if there we’re no requirement for feeling of a need for drugs then society would be entirely autistic, in a sense having little feeling/ requirement of connection. Drugs in a sense are the longing for Oneness, the longing to move into connection with everythingness and to shut down of the “self” that constantly suggest separation. It is a tribal calling in a way, yet obviously something that cannot be sustained by the body for long as most of these drugs are aggressive and harmful.

When seen like this there is no “good” or “bad” within the drug world, and in the world of addiction it is clear that these things happen as a very direct and sure response to the tensions. The situation really only changes when there is a shift in the nature of “self” and the feeling of separation, to a realization that these “me” expressions are only a state of contraction and are not actually a necessary state. When there is no sense of “me being separate” there is nil requirement for release and therefore there is absolutely no requirement for drugs or any addiction to remain. The situation of no-guilt, no-shame, no tension is one where there is no “good” or “bad” way, no actual situation of “better” or “worse”, it’s simply energetics. All there is, is energetics, just effects, this drug or this food or this behaviour creates this effect, and it does so because there is tension, so without a build-up of tension there is no requirement for aggressive release.

Nature has cycles of building up energy and release but there is no “me” involved and as such the energy isn’t so erratic, it is not irritated or aggravated, not within dis-ease, it is always from a situation that is background to the ideology of “good” vs. “bad”. The situation of “right” and “wrong” is embedded into a dualistic mind and goes hand-in-hand with “god” and the “devil”, “heaven” and “hell” but these poles are not exterior in nature they only seem so within the nature of the human “self”. UG Krishnamutri once made the point *“there is nothing outside of ‘you’.*” Outside of the “self” there is no-thing, or another way of describing this is to say that absolutely everything is outside of “self”, everything and nothing are simply expressions of paradox where duality is no longer the focus.

How does this happen? How does “self” ripen and die? Naturally. It is nature that formed the “self” within the human and so it is a process that will naturally die away as everything has its limit and the end of this is nigh. The process of living in a world where there is a sense of separation requires that there are processes of cathartic releases and/or sedatives, “uppers” and “downers” in order to balance out somehow, dependent on the personality, a way out of being a separate “self” with all “my” difficulties. One necessitates the other, a sort of symbiosis. The release of drugs balances out the conformity of society and its ruling. Drugs have always been associated with anarchic behaviour and thinking outside of the box, especially when it comes to the psychedelic types of drug. However all of these are essentially processes that are required only because we feel boxed in and caged in, as “individuals” living out our lives in little worlds.

There are very few of us who are out of the loop of “self”, which is fundamentally the basis for all our addictions, indeed we are all addicted and so the vast majority are “sinners” of one sort or another. But why does it have to be “sin”? Instead of

intolerance and judgment, why can there not be a realization that these processes are there to balance something out, instead of condemning their use, making everything about a “war on drugs”, a “war on terrorism” and a “war on cancer”. Instead of a war, can there not be a realization that the nature of judgment and violence based on duality is simply a furthering of madness, it is a dis-ease engendering further dis-ease. This is not about ending the energy of change or the energy of assertive and expressive energy, for this exists in nature too, as illustrated by lightning storms, bucks locking horns or mating displays of sea-lions on the beaches. These expressions of nature all occur without the involvement of a “self”, they are spontaneous and instinctive discharges of energy. But wars with intention based on “right” versus “wrong” and in order to “save people from themselves” is an arrogance that knows no bounds, it is the emotion of “anger” and the action of violence, which only occurs within the human realm never in wild-nature.

The energetic nature of the whole universe and all its phenomena can trigger a realization of instinctual response. This is the nature of the child sense within that does something because of a sensitively-felt connection. Children before the age of about three have this non-self-based response, as do animals and some indigenous tribal peoples who retain the child-like sensitivity. These are expressions without judgment, there is no “right” or “wrong”, “good” or “bad” here, there is just total connection and immediate response to everything, there is no rule book, anything is possible and it is possible to engage with everything that is available. It comes down to the in-the-moment sense as to whether, for example, drugs are interesting to the senses. If you can actually taste the next cigarette or the next coffee, the next snort of cocaine, if it’s actually tasted and felt this then becomes a different experience, the body is connected and responsive to what’s going on. It will reject what it doesn’t want and consume what it does, everything is on offer, nothing is “right” or “wrong”, there is an instinct that will draw you to the appropriate situation, even if that means finding yourself eating a deep-fried Mars bar, although let’s face it, this is probably a rarity!

There is total freedom when the “self” goes into retirement, whether quickly or gradually, because the senses become more interesting and seem to “speak more loudly”. This process simply occurs when it does so, as nature takes its course through us, then gradually both judgment and tension will pass away as will the requirement for many things, because the nature of separation will also pass away and there will be less tension between people and a gradual or immediate sense of non-separateness or Oneness will emerge from behind the smoke-screen.

As an interesting healer once said *“Let Him Who is Without Sin Cast the First Stone”*, the true meaning of “sin” actually meaning “off-centre” meaning a person who is within dis-ease.

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