

## **The wolf in Pavlov's dog, bites back!: The madness of behavioural psychology based in animal experimentation.**

Ivan Pavlov (1823 - 1899) was the inventor of a new form of psychology. Based on his experiments with dogs and later with humans he postulated that there was something called a "conditioned reflex", which is expressed in the saliva response of a domesticated dog to food. In Pavlov's experiment a dog is given food at a particular time every day and at that time a bell is rung. The dog then associates food with the ringing of a bell and so Pavlov noted how the saliva responses of a dog could be "trained" to function just on a bell ring even if there wasn't any actual food present, i.e. the "expectation" is for food. He concluded that people's psychology also responded in this way, with anything from severe trauma to desire and addiction, all these things were conditioned responses, so Pavlov and also Carl Jung and others went down the track of focusing on conditioning as the basis for the nature of human psycho-pathology.

The key point I would like to make is that this experiment only tells us about human psycho-pathology but tells us nothing about animals. This is not talked about but is actually vitally important in order for us to differentiate health versus the human condition. In Pavlov's experiment and most experiments involving animals what is occurring is that a naturally wild animal is being put into the mindset of the adult human called the "experiment". This shows us immediately the limitation which is ultimately the nature of western science. From the experiment's point of view the dog is being conditioned, from the natural breadth of perspective the dog is being warped or damaged by dis-ease. The reason for this is that the natural balance of life is completely altered when an adult human, usually male, wants to come in and disrupt everything and do things that will create a particular hypothesized situation. It is all based on a supremely narrow perspective, not pure-observation of nature which is something that is closer to the realms of naturalist biological studies such as Darwin attempted or anthropological studies etc, these are often warped in their analysis but a little less than "designed" scientific experimentation. Essentially all that is occurring in Pavlov's dog is a dissonance being echoed through the expression of the dog's salivary glands.

This experiment therefore only tells us about the experimenter and also the nature of what we do to the infant child, which is really an animal expression being turned into an adult with conditioning, it never expresses what happens in nature or wild nature. This is ignored by Pavlov's experiment and in fact no experimentation has ever proved Pavlov correct in the wild as no human intervention actually occurs in the wild. So wild nature has a whole different expression. Wild nature is totally alive and in the moment, there is no conditioning to anything. Conditioning is not innate to nature but only exists within the pathology of the human. The human condition is in fact the state of conditioning which at root is the passing on the belief that "I am separate from you" which is a confusion of the instinctive sense.

Often Pavlov's theories are used in a populist way to illustrate the workings of "nature" and that animals are conditioned to respond in a particular way, exactly the same as humans are. This is total anthropomorphism and incorrect. All of nature is utterly different or outside of the internalized human "self"-based psychology. With the Pavlov's dog experiment we are not experimenting on Pavlov's wolf, no, it's his

dog, the domesticated expression of thousands of years of indoctrination or “dogma” one might call it (!) of the human. The point is that wild animals and infants left to their own devices in a world without human intervention would never encounter such a disruptive experimental expression which would impede the natural order and the senses. There would never be a situation where a bell was rung and food appeared, it is all a total myth that nature expresses in this way. We can easily warp nature, bend it and form it to the will, warp the wolf into the dog, warp the grass into a grain, warp the jungle into farmland, but this is a dis-ease process not something that is connected or sensing the underpinning at-one-ness with all of the universe. Instead this process is like running on the spot, travelling without moving in order to try to find that which one is looking for, and Pavlov’s experiment proves this about the human and nothing else.

Nature never happens the same twice, it never happens to order or in regimented absolutes based on the past, it has no expectation at all, it never happens automatically for this would suggest a programme, there is never a suggestion that anyone is pulling the string because there is no-one. Nature is occurring as it is, exactly as it is right this moment, it doesn’t have a past or a future, all it has ever been is what’s going on now, there was never any training in nature for there is no-one to train or be trained, there’s never a learning in nature, no-one learned anything, nature just is what it is, it isn’t conscious of itself as there is no-one to be conscious of itself.

The main difference is that in science, in Pavlov’s experiment and in all kinds of different attempts to understand the psychology of the human being, conditioning has to rest upon something. Conditioning in the human has to be founded on the “I”. What makes Pavlov different from his dog is that Pavlov has a very absolute sense of “self”, so if Pavlov were put into the same experiment, then the whole thing would be seen as a process of “someone manipulating me” or “someone experimenting on ‘me’”. Whereas for the dog all that’s happening is that instinct has been directed to follow the human leader, therefore if the human is completely crazy then the dog will behave crazily. Pavlov proves his own madness through his dog who salivates on command. This is not so much an experiment about the ingenuity of human creativity but the absolute misunderstanding that humans are anything other than utterly powerless. This is continually mirrored in everything we do, the constant seeking for the answer and still not finding it. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, “CBT” and Neuro-linguistic Programming “NLP” are forerunners of these kinds of approaches to the human mind based on conditioned response.

The point is that while the adult human does respond in this way, the adult human is in the matrix of conditioning, as is everything he or she touches, it all turns to warpedness in fact. But to re-programme this to another set of conditions is to play games with the symptoms. However conditioning is not all the human is, there is another expression which actually lies beneath the surface, the human-infant response lives underneath the adult conditioned patterning. The infant expression is beyond the nature of conditioning, it is wild and free. It is always like this no matter what. The human’s adaptive ability and responsive expression comes from the infant aspect not from the conditioned adult add-on.

Consider the scenario where there was a bull in a field when a person was 5 years old and the bull charged and the child ran away in terror. Now at the age of 45 the person

sees a bull in a field and is immediately in a state of panic, this is often termed a “phobia”. This is because of conditioning and happens because since the age of 5 till 45 the same dream of “myself” has been playing and “my history” has been constantly clouding every moment. This is expressed by the Zen story of the 2 monks:-

*Two monks were travelling together, an older monk and a younger monk. They noticed a young woman at the edge of a stream, afraid to cross. The older monk picked her up, carried her across the stream and put her down safely on the other side. The younger monk was astonished, but he didn't say anything until their journey was over. "Why did you carry that woman across the stream? Monks aren't supposed to touch any member of the opposite sex," said the younger monk. The older monk replied "I left her at the edge of the river, are you still carrying her?"*

I like this story because the point is it isn't to do with “mindfulness” or any such attempt to “do”, it is actually simply something that *is*. One monk responds naturally/instinctively, not as a “moral”-monk (and might have been even more instinctive if the woman was willing!) the other is within a dream-world. This is the difference between the innate instinctual, or one might call indigenous expression, of the human-animal and the added-on expression of the human-adult. The point of reversion to the infant state often occurs when something happens that is completely spontaneous, there is an immediate response to the situation beyond “my” control that doesn't happen in a pattern, but happens outside of anything one has experienced before. This can break into clarity for a moment of absolutely responding to something, people often experience this state in car accidents or other emergency situations. The other situation is when there is naturally a ripening to a point of let-go that spontaneously occurs within humans, there is a beginning of a deepening interest or feeling of the immediate sensory perception and a lack of interest in the illusionary “story of me” which is kind of drifting in and out of the inner often analytical world of “myself”. This is not a practice but something that gradually and in its own way happens as a kind of openness or trust-in-life, whatever one wants to call it, when this takes over the “me” goes into retirement.

As for poor old Pavlov's dog, it is true that the human had “gained control” of the salivary processes due to the pattern or events, the warping of a very subservient or warped-to-be-subservient animal over thousands of years. However there is a wolf within and given the opportunity Pavlov's dog might have noticed a door ajar and run off with the chicken supper, even if the bell was ringing nineteen to the dozen...there are some things that conditioning can't do anything about. Within that which is trained resides that which is spontaneous and natural and if this is completely “bred out” or “trained out” then luckily life ends, i.e. if one removes instinct one takes out life. Nature is the sea within which human dis-ease is a drop of spray.

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