



The Benefits of Hysterical Thinking

Focused hysteria is the catalyst for change in a person and in institutions.

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“The only way to change someone's mind is to connect with them from the heart.”

— Rasheed Ogunlaru

Change

Species evolution occurs episodically, as does social thinking. This means it lurches from being stable and relatively unchanging, through chaos, and back to stable, again. Our own thoughts change episodically, too. Knowledge and practice expand in fits and starts.

Changing the way people think is a multidimensional process because thought forms have many attachments. There are multiple layers of resistance to any change, and what might seem reasonable at one level won't at another. Thought forms are like an ecology: a balance maintained by many interconnections.

It's this multiplicity that leads to the episodic behavior in thoughts and in evolution. Things are held in place by many connections—many of which are weak and which rely on a collective effort. When enough of these connections weaken or fail, the whole situation becomes unstable. Unlike a chain, in which all links bear the same weight, systems operate like foundations: when one support fails, more weight bears on all the others. The whole system maintains until it doesn't, and then it collapses.

The term “marketing” encapsulates the process of idea change, but the true scope of marketing is rarely appreciated. Big change takes huge marketing and it can be endlessly frustrating. If you work in a changing field—or if you live a life of change—you'll encounter many obstacles. If you're a broad-minded individual, you'll see opportunities everywhere and a phalanx of obstacles to each of them.

There is one approach to change that always works, and works to create change at all levels: crisis. Crisis is opportunity, but it's not particularly reasonable. In this piece, I argue that hysterical thinking is well suited to crisis. It's not just a reaction, it's a path. When things fall apart it pays to ride the wave, and you ride the wave by engaging and, maybe, controlling hysteria.



Marketing

Two sayings from marketing are useful for any project. The first is, "No answer doesn't mean the answer is no." The second is, "If you aren't pissing a few people off, then you aren't trying hard enough." Both of these pertain to one's approach to resistance. Life is all about resistance.

Dreams are all about resistance, too: seeing it, dealing with it, untangling it, and resolving it. In a twisted way, marketing is also about dreaming and making dreams happen. Not all marketing is creative at its root, but below its roots, which is to say in the creation of the idea that you're bringing to light. Marketing manages novelty.

Of course, I'm mixing up what we mean when we talk about dreams, but this confusion is an opportunity. Many of our ambiguous turns of phrase can be seen as opportunities. I'm mixing up the notion of the dream as a sleeping recollection, with the notion of a dream as the target of wish fulfillment.

I've written a book on COVID-19 which is a combination memoir, analysis, suggestion, and indictment. It offers suggestions pertaining to how to maintain one's health and others about how to treat the SARS-Cov-2 infection. It suggests you reappraise the information being fed to you. It's a creative book.



Resistance

Creativity is dangerous. Creativity is not an asset in business. It is not an asset in any institutional setting, including academics. Creativity spans the gamut between creating things that work better, and things that work differently. “Better” and “different” are usually seen as opposites. Better is encouraged, different is not. Real creativity is disruptive and is discouraged by those invested in how things are.

Marketing is the link between inspiration and security. How do these connect? I follow various threads of marketing advice but no one seems to know. Much of what I hear focuses on communication rather than the commodity at hand.

Marketing advice focuses on getting your product seen. This turn-the-crank approach is snake oil. Successful marketing is based on knowing who wants your product. Your niche is irrelevant if your product is unwanted. The context is key.

We don't want many of the products we need, but we need them because change is needed. We don't want these products because we don't want inconvenient change. If you sell a product that's wanted but unneeded you may succeed at first, but you'll lose the market's interest at some point. If you sell a product that's unwanted but needed, your problem is not marketing, it's ideology.

Good marketing is necessary to sell a product. There are things that must be done, but there is only so much lipstick that you can put on a pig. Van Gogh never sold a painting in his life, and he could not have sold his "uninteresting" paintings regardless of what marketing he did. Marketing van Gogh in 1875 would have been hopeless. Today his works sell for a hundred million, but in his time they had no value.

As a self-publisher, I study book marketing. All that I've heard—and I've heard a lot—focuses on one's methods and not one's products. It's said that sales will succeed using the right method, but this is false. I have books that sell well and books that sell poorly. Marketing will not make the bad sellers good.



COVID-19

I'm a good scientist: I listen well and watch carefully. When I caught COVID-19 in March, all my skills came into play. I know the institutions of science, medicine, politics, and the media. I know my body. As events unfolded, institutions were in chaos, there were few facts, and little seemed to make sense.

I am a hypnotherapist. Hypnotherapy has an ancient pedigree with applications that range from the sublime to the ridiculous. One thing on which practitioners of medical hypnosis agree is that hypnosis can have a strong effect on relaxing a person's immune response.

In the case of COVID-19, people's exaggerated immune response is a major cause of death, yet no one is mentioning hypnosis or any remediation of a psychological nature. This is in spite of the efficacy of hypnosis and the serious psychological injury being done to COVID-19 patients who survive intensive care.

I've documented my wide-ranging observations on COVID-19, culture, and medicine in my book. I provide the tools for approaching COVID-19 using hypnosis. I conclude the real problem is environmental, and say that this is being given no attention.

My book on COVID-19 reports my experience of symptoms that have been widely experienced but have largely gone unreported. It reports the institutional slugfest playing out in the media and points out failed medical, science, and public policy.

Most of all, the book leads you into a series of self-hypnotic trances. These trances, offered as MP3 audio files, emotionally connect your mind with your body, heart, and role in the larger ecology of the world.

The book directs attention to our failed corporate and environmental policies, and our continued indifference to problems that can no longer be deflected to someone else. Given the monumentally preferential and inequitable responses of many governments to the pandemic, hysterical thinking may well be the appropriate, unreasonable response.

Of the dozen MDs I asked to review the book, who are involved in the pandemic but didn't know me nor practice hypnotherapy, none responded. One MD acquainted with hypnotherapy read the book but refused to endorse it. How can doctors in the midst of a crisis for which they have no solution refuse, reject, or ignore a proposal that could save the lives of thousands? "They're too busy," you might answer. Too busy doing nothing that works!

The power of modern medicine lies not in what it can do, though it can do many things. It's power over our health lies in the obduracy of closed minds and the faith of the desperate.

Western medicine takes the reasoned approach and asks you to be reasonable: "Trust us, we know more than you. Do as we say. Follow our instructions." This is the same argument put forward by officials at all institutions who say, "Trust us. We're here to help you."

The reasoned approach has been hijacked in Western culture. In our attempts to improve our institutions we are like children arguing with adults: the adults always win because they insist on the right to define the issues. Similarly, we always lose, too, if we give institutions the power to set the dialog. It is not the most skilled player who wins the game, it is the player who sets the rules.



Emotion

Emotions are gaining increased respect and attention in research (Parkinson and Manstead, 2015; Ehrenreich-May, et al., 2007). This is a sea-change in our thinking. It is a recognition that emotion is not some defective feminine aspect, but a system that sets off an alarm when the rational mind gets out of balance.

We have not yet gotten to a level of full respect for emotional thinking, on par with the intellect, but we're heading in that direction. The social upheaval we're now witnessing—and, in fact, have experienced countless times before—is a demonstration that emotional distress plays an essential role in personal and social evolution.

Playing a rigged game can drive a person crazy. Feeling crazy is a justifiable response. Kids throw tantrums and adults riot. It is rarely a winning strategy, but it usually disrupts the system.

It's nice to advocate passive resistance and reasonable response, but, when playing a rigged game or confronting a person with a personality disorder, these tactics do not work. Hysterical thinking is break-out thinking, and, break-out thinking triggers episodic changes.

References

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