The Confusion of Being Of or Being In

Independence is more complicated than we're led to believe.

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"I'm fiercely independent, but I'm also terrified of being alone."
— **Adam Levine**, musician

Codependent or Independent

What you have in mind is not your mind, it's what your mind is filled with. This old mix-up of being **IN** the world or being **OF** the world was pointed out by Jesus. It continues to crop up everywhere; it never seems to be resolved.

It used to be that being analytical meant being unemotional and detached, but this is breaking down. There is a trend with science-minded people becoming more personally involved. Conflicts of real versus fake, culture versus politics, and responsible stewardship is confusing people's identity. As more

people are being held responsible, and more people are confronting their responsibilities, we're seeing increasing amounts of blame-assigning and acrimony.

This is a critical issue in mental health where you have to balance having a purpose with becoming captured by it. Almost every client I work with—no, EVERY client I work with—struggles with being pulled down by the conflicts that arise from their engagements. Phrased like this, could it be any other way?

The contents of your mind makes you “in the world.” Imbued with it and defined by it. But this state of your mind is not “of the world.” Your state of mind is a separate thing that you create. It is a state of awareness independent of your thoughts. Everyone notices that we feel good or bad depending on whether what’s happening to us is good or bad. In this way we are drawn in: we become what’s happening to us.

We can’t separate who we are from how we feel, at least, most people are not able to most of the time. To keep your emotional awareness separate from your emotional involvement is like keeping two magnets apart. The key is recognizing that your participation and your being are different. They converge because you don’t distinguish them.

Codependent By Training

Everything we’re taught points to their being the same—leading us to believe that we are what we eat. “Being of” means acting in relation to, while “being in” means being defined by. These are entirely different. We would notice this if we had a being separate from our doing, but we don’t because we are taught not to.

In order to be your own person you need to have spiritual self-confidence. You need your own purpose, which is the desire to accomplish something that only you can do for yourself. In most cases, people's emotional distress stems from a lack of self-confidence.

Lacking a way of fulfilling ourselves by ourselves, we look to others to provide fulfillment for us. Religions capture people by providing this missing self-confidence. It seems so natural that if you lack something, you go out and get it, or you let others give it to you. Other needy people support you in this illusion because they need you to need them.

That's how a barter economy works: everyone trades everything. No one is self-sufficient. This is also the foundation for imperialism: if we don't have it then we'll go get it. Imperialism is alive and well, unfortunately.

Our needy identities are being shaped by our culture of scarcity. We must start to recognize that our personal identities are subjugated by culture in the way that the forest overgrows the field. We are the field and the institutions are the trees. Individuals become compost for the organizational metabolism. We will be forced underground unless we preserve our spiritual independence.

I have nothing against trees, but in this metaphor the trees are governments and corporations, and these institutions are not human. Many of today's institutions—governments, corporations, and syndicates—are not sustainable. They are built on exploitative models that use resources to exhaustion.

Corporate ecology, like natural ecology, only finds balance when there is resistance to exploitation forcing resources to be used sustainably. This is natural; this is evolution. Edible resources are eaten. The most sustainable solution is to make yourself inedible. Even bacteria know this; why don't you?

Consciousness and Content

> *"The key definitional elements of the terms states of consciousness and altered states of consciousness indicate a theoretical confusion of consciousness and the content of consciousness. That is, objects are confused with the process that renders them perceptible. We will refer to this error as the consciousness/content fallacy."*
>
> — **Adam J. Rock** and **Stanley Krippner** (2011)

Rock and Krippner are referring to the consciousness/content confusion in the psychology of consciousness. This confusion is becoming more apparent. People are being held socially responsible for their economic decisions, and more people are seeing the conflict between doing the right thing and accepting the choices they're given.

Until you can distinguish your involvement from your identity you won't be able to create the boundary that will protect you from predators. Bees sting, thorns scratch, and my cat bites. Until you can separate what protects you from what enhances you, the protections you need will isolate you from sustenance, and you will either be poisoned or isolated.

If this sounds too socio-biological, then you are not distinguishing doing from being. This is basic ecology and consciousness can be understood as a form of ecology: a feedback system design to enhance learning, growth, and prosperity. This is what you get when you combine everyone's free will, where learning and evolving dance together.

This is a struggle between those who need what you have, and your efforts to have what others need. This lack of shared purpose underlies our increasing levels of personal and social distress. The solution is to have a consciousness that can exist in balance without scarcity or excess.

This is the topic of the book I'm now finishing, called "Instant Enlightenment, Waking Up Your State of Mind." In the book, I explore all the hooks on which we hang our identity. These include sensations, perceptions, thoughts, emotions, memory, and our biological inheritance. The confusion of our personal value with our material value—which results in having a weak identity—exists at multiple levels. This is the reason it's so hard for us to establish an independent sense of purpose.

Our mind identifies with what our body can do or how our body appears, with the thoughts in our heads, and with our feelings. We fail to recognize the illusion of our perception, the hijacking of our attention, and how we've sacrificed our emotions . We trade parts of ourselves for the things we need.

The consciousness/content fallacy does not exist at just a single level as the Bible suggests, it exists at multiple levels. There are many aspects of our being and, at each level, we can fail to recognize, establish, and protect our independence.

Our consciousness is a structure whose parts needs to be connected, not a pile of stones. It cannot be expressed in any word, phrase, or discourse because it's not intellectual. Learning to build spirit is bigger than we've been led to believe. It involves connections between all our senses, memories, and plans.

Multiple skills need to be developed and held in place as we build other skills to support them. You "get it" when you begin creating a foundation for the whole structure of conscious independence. This structure involves expanding and connecting your awareness at different levels. This restores power to emotionally disturbed, depressed, and traumatized people, even empowering people who are considered mentally ill. It is a necessary prerequisite for achieving a fulfilled and balanced life.

You'll have to wait for the book for the details. To explore the topic sooner, read this blog, listen to my interviews, and join my weekend sessions. I will be offer sessions on a revised schedule for the convenience of people in both Eastern and Western time zones.

References

Rock, A. J., & Krippner, S. (2011). States of Consciousness Redefined as Patterns of Phenomenal Properties: An Experimental Application (pp.257-272), in Cvetkovic & Cosic (Eds.). *States of Consciousness, Experimental Insights into Meditation, Waking, Sleep, and Dreams*, Springer, Heidelberg.

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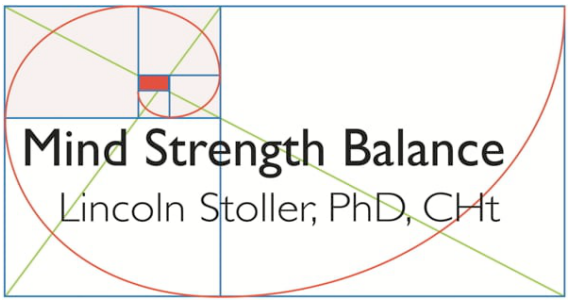
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