



## Do Less to Heal. Do More to Grow?

In our society, health and power equals money. Change is discouraged.

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*“Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants.”*

— Epictetus, philosopher

## Our Disintegrated Notion of Self

To be healthy is a whole state. It is not different projects for different ends. A fundamental problem that pervades Western mental health is the equation of abnormal with pathology. But it’s more than just this, it’s the inclination to define anything that generates conflict as illness. And along with this is the equally unbalanced trend to celebrate anything that generates stability and wealth. To celebrate power

itself.

When this is boiled down to therapy, you're left with a syrup that inevitably says, "do less of what gets you less power, and do more of what gets you more power." And, for the most part, power equals money, and standard therapy works to support this.

Is it a coincidence that no mental illness is considered to be an economic advantage, and all character traits that generate economic advantage are excused?

Seekers of enlightenment will remove themselves from social circles, but have you ever heard of a psychotherapist eschewing the consensus? Do you know of any doctors who advertise their years spent in seclusion? A few have, and those in their profession respond with suspicion or rejection.

Carl Jung's *Red Book* chronicles his inner journeys from 1915 to 1916, and the book is considered his major work. "The years ... when I pursued the inner images, were the most important time of my life. Everything else is to be derived from this," he said. Yet there is no mention of it, training for it, or encouragement to do it in any psychotherapeutic training I know of. Jung never revealed this work, and it's unclear if he ever intended to. It was published posthumously by his estate in 2009.

Consider how entirely differently we view mental health depending on its context:

**Q1:** How do we treat manipulators who undo our plans, in contrast to those who further them?

**A1:** A pathological liar in the first case, a successful politician in the second.

**Q2:** What name do we give perpetually combative people who everyone finds threatening, versus those same people who further our plans for wealth and security?

**A2:** Oppositional/defiant in the first case, and warriors in the second.

**Q3:** What do we call a warrior achieving victory in the field, versus the same person attempting the same thing when living among us?

**A3:** A hero in one case, a victim of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in the other.

**Q4:** People who are always equivocating are called one thing when they help us, and something else when they're unreliable and disturb our plans. How do we describe them?

**A4:** A deep thinker in the first case, and a person with a personality disorder in the second.

All of these dichotomies are questions of scope, of knowing how to behave. These decisions of scope are circumscribed, and it's not up to you. You're taught what's expected with the object of teaching you

how to think.

No one really tests your thinking, but your behavior is always under examination. You're admonished to support the social mold, and think of it as something that protects you. So what happens when mostly untrained and unstable people feel the social mold is broken?



## One's Proper Role

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, the DSM, encourages us to make distinctions based on personal impairment and pervasive disregard. These are both outcome-based, not thought-based criteria. The DSM advises us to base our distinctions on “an enduring pattern of inner experience and behavior that deviates markedly from the expectations of the individual's culture” (DSM, 2012). It does not clarify whether these cultural expectations are related to process or outcome, but it assumes that if you don't follow the protocol, it's your mind that is at fault.

This dichotomy in how we view sanity and behavior leads us to confusion. We're taught opposing categories, the positive as opposed to the negative. We are not taught to discern complementary parts of a whole, such as a root and branch. The difference lies in the rigidity of the conflicts, not in the distinctions between things.

Distinctions are fluid, and further our exploration. Conflicts are rarely useful because they can't be reconciled. For example, cultures may be compatible, but enemies, by definition, are not.

We don't understand the underlying cause for these thought patterns. We are only encouraged to look on the surface. As a result, we can never heal one or enhance the other because we are not engaged with either at a meaningful level.

To preserve this status quo, counseling and coaching are kept apart. It is part of our Western social norm to reward psychopathology when it serves the commons, and curtail it when it interferes with expectations.

What's expected could be an individual's ability to support themselves, their family, community, or country. A citizen who cannot repress their rage is dismissed from their responsibilities. But a soldier who will not express their rage is also dismissed. It's not your presentation that's problematic, it's the context of it.

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If you'd like to create more integration before you disintegrate, short calls are free.

Schedule a time on my calendar and I'll tell you what I hear.

<https://www.mindstrengthbalance.com/schedule15>

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## Students Are Trained to Disintegrate

A student is someone who accepts the existence of knowledge that they don't know, while accepting that someone will teach them. It's important that there is someone who knows what the student is to learn, and it's important for the student to know when to stop learning and start practicing. In this regard, learning is training and not play. That's why play continues to be deprecated as a trivial and discouraged mode of learning.

A student is directed to neither fixate on the past nor invent the future. Instead, the student is urged to mold themselves along the lines of desired thought and behavior. A student is anyone who is open to being molded.

As a physics student, I was encouraged to ask questions that were answered in the text. But when I asked questions that were not answered, I was literally evicted from class. None of the important questions are answered in the text. All of what's important for the future is absent from the text, the courses, and the mentality of the teachers. There is less than one exceptional teacher in a hundred, and most students will never encounter any.

*“Education shows you what has been and leaves you to make the deduction as to what may be. Education as we pursue it cannot prophesy, and does not... The present education system is the trampling of the herd.”*

— **Frank Lloyd Wright**, architect

I was a bad student, but I am a good entrepreneur. Anyone who becomes distraught over either the text's answers or lack of answers is considered to be deficient, or to be inadequately endowed, or even mentally ill.

Students are trained to think in terms of right or wrong, knowing or not knowing, having or lacking authority. The Western educational system is a project in social engineering. It is advertised as preparing you for a successful life, but its first role is to train you to think in successful terms, and for that you must defer to authority.

If you are too positive, too enthusiastic, too unrestrained, or if you are not sufficiently deferential, insecure, and in alliance with social expectations, then you are considered a failure as a student. Successful students are recommended, supported, encouraged, and employed. Unsuccessful students are discouraged and removed.

There have been some schools that have moved against this trend, and they are treated with suspicion and given limited support. We might call them “alternative,” and some have been given credit for encouraging leaders in their fields, but on the whole, these schools struggle and shut down. Examples of positive, world changing schools that shut down are Germany's Bauhaus in the 1930s, and Black Mountain College in the 1950s.

*“Many alternative colleges and programs (were) launched in the 1960s and 1970s, often described as experiments... the vast majority of these have either closed or adopted more mainstream approaches.”*

— **Wikipedia** ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evergreen\\_State\\_College](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evergreen_State_College))





## **Be Ashamed, Be Very Ashamed**

It is currently popular to assign shame to empowered people in order to make disempowered people feel more powerful. This is reflected in some aspects of the WOKE movement. In my neighborhood, it manifests as White elementary school teachers encouraging White children to feel ashamed of what their ancestors did to repressed and injured minorities, be they Black, Indigenous, or otherwise.

This movement is presented as a means of reparation, but it's really a means of empowering White people. It empowers people who feel guilty by transferring their guilt to others, thereby absolving them and making them feel content with privilege. And children are prime targets for this, as they have always been prime targets for abuse.

In those institutions that impose this abuse, children are not allowed to challenge it. In fact, they are graded on the degree to which they accept projected guilt.

If the desire for reparations was sincere, then opportunities for collaboration and alliance would be created. This is not done because this is an effort to verify not allay guilt, much as the way a mentally ill parent abuses their children. It is our obligation as a culture to recognize and stop this.



## Insanity is To Be Fixed, Opportunity is To Be Pursued

A person who is struggling mentally is directed to leave behind or prevail over a disability. If that's not possible, then they're taught ways to compensate for it. Illness is rarely seen as an opportunity, even when illness emerges from opportunity.

*"I was about to graduate with this job waiting for me, and then I contracted mono, which was probably my way of being propelled into the adult world."*

— **Paul W.** (personal communication)

*"Mononucleosis was the biggest blessing, because otherwise I was... dying in that school."*

— **George Plotkin, MD** (Stoller, 2019, p. 167), from *The Learning Project*

A person who endeavors to be more successful is encouraged to leverage their strengths. They are not encouraged to return to their weaknesses, consider their origins, and repair their disregard or impairment. If that impairment interferes with their otherwise productive plans, it's called an illness, and they have a disability.

A disability is rarely considered an ability, and an ability is rarely considered a disability. You can see that this is built into the language. You're asked to believe this must be true because the language



presents the two as opposites.

The truth is that you are a complex person whose abilities and disabilities are not separate things. To put you into one bin or the other, or to encourage you to think from one perspective exclusive of the other, is a social sickness that seems especially Western in its origin.

In my counseling certification program, there was no mention of coaching a person with a disability. And when coaching was discussed, it was presented as inappropriate for a mentally troubled person. Entirely different protocols were suggested for reducing disability and enhancing ability, and we were told to keep them separate.

When you look at the credentials of most life and business coaches, not only do they have no training in counseling or therapy, they are often proud to say they pay no regard to a person's weaknesses. As a result, you are taught to disintegrate yourself by people who are themselves disintegrated, certified, and endorsed in their ability to disintegrate you. Is it any wonder our culture is disintegrated?



## **Insanity is To Be Pursued, Opportunity is To Be Fixed**

If we turn the language around, it doesn't make sense. That's to be expected. The language creates a box that does not have a way out. To correct this, to become an integrated person, you must re-invent the language. This is not so easy because the language is not in our heads, it's in our hearts. We have

become carriers of it, and it controls what we see and how we feel.

I ask my clients to explain themselves, and what I'm looking for is that point where they no longer can. It is at that point that we're at a threshold of change. The question then becomes, "Do you want to go further?" Most people are not ready to move beyond this point.

Reaching the limit of your language is the limit of what makes sense. Most likely, you have been building a life on what you understand and control. If you've come to me for counseling, then you are probably finding this is somewhat of a dead end. What do you do then?

Most people struggle. They look for alternatives, something to blame, or a change in situation such as a divorce or a physical illness. The last thing they do is change themselves for the fairly good reason that they don't know how.

What they don't want to do is to lose their minds. They'd rather lose their health or their relationships. Sometimes, they'd rather lose their lives. It's hard to change your reality when it is the only thing you're standing on.

This topic brings us very close to addiction. People turn to drugs as a way to make themselves more ill and feel better. It isn't recognized that it is the greater feeling of comfort in illness that makes an addict feel better. An addict is not happy to be rid of themselves, they are happy to be themselves, to be free of the suffering of their contradictions.

I work with these people. They are close to normal, except that are stuck at a dead end. It feels like they have no choice and, rationally, they don't. Their choice is to rebuild their self-talk, their language, and the meaning of most of the associations on which they've built their personality.

Is it any surprise that this dead end appears on the road to success? You've been coached to better manifest your potential, and now your life is falling apart! It is typically that successful people become depressed in their old age because they never resolved what was healthy to begin with.

This division between illness and wellness is insane. It is what's driving a cultural collapse. The more successful we become at organizing our exploitative society, the more successfully we disintegrate ourselves. We can expect more success and disintegration in the future. If you're not sure if this is what you want, I'd like to hear from you.

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