

“IT'S THE END OF THE WORLD BECAUSE I DON'T FEEL GOOD.”

Ever noticed how when you feel shit, the world feels shit too?

This article comes in response to the video:

*'Apocalypse Never: Michael Shellenberger - The
JBP Podcast - S4 E51.'*

AN EXTRACT FROM THE CONVERSATION:

“Is apocalyptic environmentalism depressing, or... are depressed people attracted to apocalyptic environmentalism? Or both...? ... Aaron Beck... the founder of Cognitive Behavioural Therapy... the 3 structures of depressed people that he identified [are]:

- *'I'm a terrible person';*
- *'the world is a terrible place,' and;*
- *'the future is bleak...'*

That's the exact same 3 structures of every environmental narrative. So every environmental narrative is that:

- *'humans are terrible, [a] cancer on the planet';*
- *'the world is going to hell in a handbasket,' and;*
- *'the end is nigh...''*

~Michael Shellenberger

“...Perhaps driving those three axioms home, emphatically and forcefully, isn't the wisest thing to be doing to young children... the fact of that overlap with depressive thinking...”

~Jordan Peterson.

Such an interesting conversation about the relationship between depression and apocalyptic environmentalism. Are we depressed because the world is in a sorry state? Or is the world- our world- in a sorry state because we are depressed? Or rather, do we notice all the bad bits for that reason? When we are depressed, do we somehow gravitate towards depressive thinking and depressive ideologies- because they resonate with us on some level? Or are we just seeing the situation impersonally, for what it is? Does depression come from 'the state of the world' (not just *my* world, but *the* world), or is 'the state of the world' the projection and proclamation of (personal, rather than a universal[ised]) depression?

What about other kinds of ideology? Authoritarian ideology, for example. If we subscribe to it, in that we can't stand other ways of thinking, looking at and speaking about things, other ways of doing things (not necessarily standing up and saying, 'I am an authoritarian'- because who would likely do that?!)- *why is this?* Is it a need to exert power? Or is it a need to control? What is it in us that needs to control? To make uniform? To bend to one's will? Is it the feeling of a lack of power? What are we seeking to alleviate or make up for? What are we seeking to express? What are we protecting or guarding against? Or staving off? Anything? Nothing? Could it be a dynamic born out of insecurity for whatever reason- and simply a need to feel safe and secure? Maybe because there is a memory of a time when we didn't? Or there is a fear that there will be a time when we aren't?

Here's a good question. How do negative mental states play into supporting the official covid narrative? And how do they play into supporting alternative 'conspiracy' narratives? (And what about positive states and reward systems [internal and external]- how are they involved, too?). Neither 'official' nor 'alternative' narratives make you feel particularly good about the state of the world. Are they (either of them) the objective reality? Or are you simply drawn to such stories and interpretations (assuming you are...) as an unconscious indulgence of a negative state? And is this negative state generated? Through confusion, fear, learned helplessness? Division and disharmony comes from polarisation into one or other negative states- as each of us retracts into what we think we can protect. Whether it be 'health' or 'freedom.' As though those two things have to be diametrically opposed- which they don't. And they aren't. 'The world is shit this way, the world is shit that way.' Let's all fight and let government sort it out. Isn't that what government would want, if it was skewed and fragmented itself? So that it is appointed the power to arbitrate. What happens when it's not shit? When we're not reduced to that?

It's a play of your own subconscious. Bits of your consciousness you own (i.e. acknowledge as your own, or *as you* even...), and bits that you don't. The 'justified self,' and the 'terrible other.' The fragmented psyche. When it's not whole, it can be (and is) drawn into separation and division. Where the fight is fought. But are some things just 'the truth' to you because you're on that level? Whatever *that level* is. Mistaking a subjective truth of relative experience for an objective or universal one, and blurring the distinction, unawares? As always, awareness is key to seeing what is happening. In ourselves and in the world.

Certainly, this kind of discussion is not to deny the real external problems that have real external solutions, nor to justify turning a blind eye to any real perpetrators. Certainly, assuming there are actual transgressions taking place. Like a kind of misplaced mindfulness that just trains you to passively accept whatever shit situation it is without changing it. That would be a misuse of any findings of this exploration. As it is a misuse of the principles of mindfulness, too. Instead, this article's discussion highlights the dynamic between self and world that is the whole reason spirituality is important. The whole reason that study of the self is important. That awareness of one's patterning is important. Crucial. Because- to a large extent- *we see as we are*. And act that out. Through our own chosen way, and our relationships with others.

Our own internal state of being picks out from the whole world of possibility- the vast spectrum of being- what resonates with it. Dark thoughts might lead to dark patterns of behaviour. Light thoughts, to light living. Dark patterns of behaviour might lead to dark thoughts. Light living, to light thoughts. Mediocrity to more mediocrity. You see, it's a cycle. As we heal ourselves, the world is healed. This is not merely a nice fluffy sentiment, giving false hope. It is a realistic dynamic- and herein is the seed of our own power. It is not escapist. It is realist. (Just seeing a depth of reality that might usually be skipped over or ignored). It is not a running away, but a facing. And it takes courage and effort to see and live by. Because it hands you back to yourself. Where you have empowered responsibility, and can no longer fob it off onto someone else. Can no longer blame the government, or ask them to save you. And will no longer find it enough to displace all the praise or blame onto someone or something else. This is in no way intended to deny the impact of outside forces acting upon us. Nor to deny the importance of negotiating them well. But is to say that this awareness hands us back to ourselves- where we can make a difference to our own lives in whatever way we can, and respond to the events of our reality more skilfully than we would without self-awareness.

Clearly, it's not just environmentalism- it's the covid stuff, and it's the conspiracy stuff... whichever way you look at it, it's all of it. Everything that this revelation effects. Whatever camp you're in. How does a negative frame of mind play into subscribing to the belief that the world is about to end- that these are the 'end times'? Whether that be in a religious or environmental sense, or both. That we're all going to be destroyed by a disease caused by a new virus, destroyed by an asteroid, or controlled by malevolent aliens, right-wing extremists, far-left radicals, or whatever it is. Could it all just be low vibration... making us think like this? Surely not all of it. Low vibration across all separate camps and all lines of fissure? Is it all down to us, or could it be deliberately manufactured? And even then, is it still all down to us? And if so, what's the solution? To pick ourselves up and focus on something higher? To practise something better? Some more fulfilling *Life Principle*? What kinds of things do we focus on and give our attention to when we feel good? What does it feel uplifting to focus upon? For the human spirit to dwell in, or upon? What kind of ways do we live then?

When you feel good about yourself, it's easier to live in ways that support wellness. Again, it's a self-perpetuating loop, or cycle. It's easier to get out and do enjoyable things when you're in that loop. When you're outside of it, it can take a lot of energy to get back on. I

mean, when you feel depressed, how motivated do you feel to get out and shift that feeling? To shift into a better frame of mind? You know it will help, but... nah. When you feel bad about yourself and the world, what inclination is there to do anything good for it? To walk in nature or do some exercise or meditate? To start a social enterprise? Yes, an awareness of the external problems can lead to the finding of a solution in the real, grounded, practical world reality. But we can't leave out the underlying causes, the inner dimensions which reveal to us (and *are*) our blockages and freedoms, frameworks of understanding, our conditioned and conditional patterning, our motivations, our hopes, dreams and wishes, our binary and non-binary minds, nervous systems, emotional states and operating systems. These things are equally real, practical, and grounded once understood- even if seemingly under-recognised and under-valued or neglected in the wider society of 'doing, doing, doing' without too much questioning that might cause delay, or sacrifice the productivity and the imperative of the economic model.

You might know you need good things, might want them, but not give them to yourself, allow yourself to receive them, or create the opportunities for those good things to arise. Because you don't *feel* like it. We're not going to find world opportunities by moping around at home- we know this. (Though sometimes time at home can be just what we need). Yes, there might be external things in the way, real or imagined. Certain constraints or parameters. Internal aspects too. You know how it is when you're stuck in a rut. Possibility can seem narrower. Our view- and approach to life- less expanded. Perhaps I'm talking about myself. We all feel it- the ups, the downs. But whenever we talk about anything, are we ever coming from any position other than our own perspective? Is that even possible? Yes there is empathy, and there can be compassion. But in the end we're stuck with ourselves in whatever we're stuck with, and free in our own freedom. Our reality is our reality. It is the case for each of us. What are we arguing for?

So without being drawn into a solipsistic nightmare, can we now see how our own nebulous structures, shapes, patterns, activity and mental-emotional configurations might play into the things we subscribe to, and the things we reject? Can we clarify these things to ourselves, see what we are directed by? Because it's all happening. The whole world. The world of possibility. All the things you agree with, and all the things you disagree with- it's all already happening. And yet you have your own way. Your own point on the spectrum of *Life's* possibility. Naturally so. Your outlook on life. Your feeling *in* Life. This is uniquely yours, and is to be respected and honoured. And it is the same for each of us, differently.

Yes, we're all shaped by experience and have our own natural tendencies and leanings. But why do we focus upon what we focus upon? It's all good questioning, inquiry and exploration... and in the end, it's up to us to do it. But don't let that be another layer of inner self commentary to chastise yourself with if you're not! Unless that's what you choose. But why on Earth would you choose that? On an Earth of vast and wonderful possibility and largely unexplored potential... you are *Alive! Life seeks to grow into itself and the fullest realisation of its Nature. This is happening through you. As you. Here and Now. Already. Enough.*

~Nathan Godolphin, 30/10/21.