

Thought Experiment: America as an Old Married Couple

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Imagine the United States as a long-married couple. They've been together for centuries now—through wars, recessions, celebrations, and revolutions. They've built a home, raised generations, and created a legacy, but somewhere along the way, they forgot how to listen to each other.

In this dynamic, **the Republican Party** plays the role of the *father figure*: the protector, the provider, the one who believes in strength, order, and self-reliance. He believes in hard work, pulling yourself up by your bootstraps, and facing adversity head-on. He's tough because life is tough. He comes from a background where safety and sacrifice are sacred. Many of his values have been shaped by institutions like the military, law enforcement, and national security agencies—systems that demand discipline, hierarchy, and, often, compartmentalization. He's seen the worst of humanity and believes protection is love.

On the other side, **the Democratic Party** is the *mother figure*: the caregiver, the nurturer, the one who believes in compassion, cooperation, and collective growth. She champions education, empathy, and the belief that it takes a village to raise a child—or to build a just society. Her worldview is shaped by academia, social work, and humanitarian ideals. She sees suffering not as weakness, but as a call for support. She believes protection is healing.

Now, imagine these two archetypes, living under one roof, trying to raise the nation together. The father says, “*We need to toughen up.*” The mother replies, “*We need to soften and open up.*” And so the arguments begin, again and again.

It's easy to label one as “right” and the other as “wrong,” but the truth is—**both are necessary**. A child, a community, a country *needs* both protection and care. Strength and empathy. Logic and intuition. Just like the **left and right hemispheres of the brain**, each side serves a different function, but only together can they form a coherent, intelligent whole.

Yes, this is an overgeneralization—but sometimes metaphors help us see what facts and headlines obscure: **we're not enemies. We're a family. And the real dysfunction isn't in the values themselves—but in the leadership that's lost the plot.**

Our leaders—the heads of this household—have become entrenched in ego, power, and performance. They pit mother against father, neighbor against neighbor, not for unity, but for control. And while they argue, the children—the people—suffer.

The institutions that shape these figures also play a role in the divide. Many conservatives are steeped in systems where secrecy and security are paramount—military, intelligence, police—where threats are real and the cost of failure is high. Their worldview becomes filtered through survival. Meanwhile, progressives are often shaped by academia and social theory, where nuance, diversity, and inclusivity are emphasized, sometimes to the point of abstraction. Their worldview filters through the lens of possibility and potential.

Perspective isn't the problem—division is. And if we want to keep this house standing, we need to stop trying to “win” the argument and start listening again. That starts with **new**

leadership—fresh minds and open hearts, untainted by old grudges, willing to bridge both sides of the brain, both sides of the aisle.

Because if this old married couple doesn't remember what brought them together in the first place—**love of family, freedom, and future**—the house might not survive another generation.

Much love,

Brenda

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