

Much as hope needs to be given to the psychologically afflicted, I am not particularly optimistic about the overall outcome for victims of child sexual abuse. So much gets warped, corrupted, and confused. People who are to be given a child's trust gain entry to a child's private interior regions and processes, and lay claim to them. Children violated get sexualized early; long before puberty they develop sexual responses and appetites without any of the fundamentals needed for "understanding" and managing them. They are taught that these are OK, even divine, too special for ordinary people to understand and accept, a pleasure "forbidden" only because "lesser" people "won't go there." An adult claims a child's "first love" in a deviant manner; the libidinal energy that flows at these times cements these flushed feelings in place. Arousal and love get placed "off the charts" in "sublime" areas that regularly trump the mundane and pedestrian case made that these "great loves" are in fact counterfeit, inferior, and wrong.

I have struggled to find a psychological-personality theory that adequately addresses what goes on here. Even if it does not locate enough in bodily, corporeal language and meaning, Ego State theory comes up best in my estimation; different ego states get planted and established in an individual—we all have them—with different degrees of awareness both by them and of them, with the "alters" possible that in extreme cases produce Multiple Personality Disorder (MPD), now called Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID).

The psychiatric establishment theorists were not going to let those MPD "flakes" control the definition of this. As I also posit the demonic intruding in such arenas, Ego State theory allows for this too, though to maintain standing in secular psychiatry, theorists stop before going this far. This may keep some kooks at bay and preserve therapist incomes, but it weakens the theory and limits the therapeutic power of it. Just as the demonic likes it.

The vexing and exasperating affliction that is addiction is explained better by Ego State theory I feel than any other; it was difficult to accept, but I think we are more than one "self" even if they are not all equal in origin, merit, or legitimacy, and we have necessarily been given the responsibility of choice through inner work, discernment, and prayer, making just peace with some "selves" and war with others. In large part the goal is to merge and meld these "split-off" selves where possible—appeasing some by recognizing that they came into being for legitimate reasons, for instance protecting a vulnerable pre-existing "self" expression of an ego state—back consolidated into a legitimate

primary ego state. But not all ego states are benign at heart, educable, or willing to accede to a better outcome.

The lapses in addiction can be considered caused by ego states that refuse to budge or give way. I will never forget a scene from a movie about the founders of AA. Bill W., a terrible alcoholic, and "Doctor Bob," heroically founded it. But once, after Bill Wilson had got his act together and was riding high leading the movement, a woman asked him casually in a social occasion "What would you like now, Bill?" "Right now, madam, all I want is a drink."

The child nevertheless grows up and realizes something is wrong, not right, at least in those with the rudiments of a genuine conscience and the full complement of basic human capacities (that psychopaths do not have). They see what others enjoy along "natural," healthy, normal channels and realize they cannot have that—someone and something else has claimed that privilege from them—in pure ways unsullied by past anomalous sexual intimacy. (We shall overlook the sad fact that the first sexual experiences of most young women are in fact not so "wonderful.") The violated begin to feel increasingly "dirty," damaged, and cast out from hope of a normal life. Whatever arousal they may feel along normal heterosexual lines—if they can feel it—when they try to explore it, this desire too often end up being trumped by Desire in place from prior implantation. They come to live with a deviant "difference" and secret too shameful to divulge; they feel, with good reason, that this would cut them off from others completely. Since this starts in childhood, it becomes even more repressed and driven underground into the unconscious, nevertheless causing psychic disruptions that further disturb the poor beleaguered—even if aggressive—carrier of such a vexing burden. Efforts at normalcy just keep floundering.

So many of the gains to be made in "insight" talk therapy, worthy as they are, do not have root in the deepest nonverbal areas of "self" where the damage has been done. Sessions end on good notes, progress seems to have been made, but the client soon ends up back in the solitary domain where "demons" await. Huge therapeutic experiential undertakings are necessary, and these typically are harrowing and even dangerous, before the afflicted can begin to sort out what all happened in the first place, and how and why it has played out as it has. (Exorcism has real substance and status, but who can perform such credibly now? When I looked at a photo of the Pope's chosen Chief Exorcist, I saw instead someone who had spent too much time in the Devil's company and come to look like him.) Somewhere early it was planted in the child that "You

like it!" and "You little 'devil-angel', you seduce me too." Try getting your mind around that and conscience when all you have to work with are unstable memories with visceral feelings and childlike-childish emotions floating in a conflicted false sea of "love."

Much as sexual abuse victims can still go on to lead fulfilling lives, the "wisdom" on which this is premised (even in exclusive profound depth) is a "terrible" and extremely hard-won. Past selves and ego states still haunt the afflicted, often surprising them at the most inopportune times. They have A LOT to come to terms with, to discern right and wrong, innocence and guilt, in. They have to do so having been rendered not as strong and positive, unified, as they could have been. It helps immensely when the perpetrator admits baldly what he/she did, validating memories and impressions, and apologizes as best possible for it. And much as I have always struggled to understand the merits of vengeance, I know what the desire feels like, and I know that when the perpetrator is punished in truly impactful painful ways, incapacitating (from ordinary life) the villain like the victim feels (even if left at large), it helps the victim to feel better about the Justice, Compassion, Forgiveness, and all-overcoming Love at the Heart of Things. As you can imagine this at best is a "process" gained in increments, but with thresholds that can be reached and held by the fortunate. Going through a "worldly" legal system process to a judgment can be a major and necessary step in this, messy, ugly, and "unjust" as it can be bringing out the worst, as well as maybe the best, in everyone. And believe me, the adult perpetrator needs to suffer and be made an example of; otherwise, the propensity to offend in others will recognize that indulging in such can, even if caught, not prove "fatal" to a career or one's freedom. In their worst moments, they will give themselves over to offending too, and again.

There! Enough of this. More psychological theorizing than you ever wanted to wade through. You won't ask again!