

Selfish Virtue by Rich Norman

I am an idiot. I have admitted it long ago, as is clear enough by the title of the book which I advertise along with this column, *This New Day: Self Creation—The Wisdom of an Idiot*. This time I know it's true, or so I thought as I contemplated the decision: I have decided to begin my own psychology journal. A moronic decision. The amount of work is staggering. You see, I have found something both useful and new...hell—useful doesn't even cover the half of it. These days, drugs are the top choice for treating mental illness. This is troublesome for a variety of reasons, not least of which is the fact that the very most basic and "objective" of criteria for categorizing mental illness, a diagnostic manual now being redesigned, to be known as the DSM-5, is under what I will call: "suspicious influences." Even those who are deeply entwined in the process are in revolt, the head of the National Institute of Mental Health, Dr. Thomas Insel, calling the new criteria unscientific, a huge blow, and an honest one. Please go to:

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/elements/2013/05/the-scientific-backlash-against-the-dsm.html>

Not only is there a suspicious "propensity" to deny real medical science for politics and profit, as terms thousands of years old such as hysteria, a term with clear psychodynamics (Freud, 1915, pp. 181-185) having already been discarded (Feinstein, 2011), but also, a new, highly profitable and unscientific trend appears to be emerging: a "propensity" *to name clusters of symptoms* which I believe correspond to drugs to be sold—*as illnesses*. That is *my opinion* of what is, and has been motivating things, and you will not find it spoken aloud elsewhere. What is sure, and not just an opinion: This leaves us with no connection to the real causes of an illness, just a long and arbitrary list of potions to apply in order to treat an ever growing list of "illnesses." Dear reader, look at all that "qualifying" punctuation! If the cause of the problem is the need for agreement amongst petty psychiatrists who create unscientific diagnoses, or the warping of science to serve profit matters not: All those qualifying quotation marks and italics should tell you something—someone is lying!

As I have mentioned in a previous column I have designed a method to develop a brain scan which will provide an answer to this problem, allowing a quantitative method of diagnosis for mental illness. Such a method would not be vulnerable to human influences and the contamination of monetary or political factors, offering reliable diagnosis of each condition in cases where no human expert is available, and, a reliable second opinion in cases where expert diagnosis is at hand, and perhaps, even detail the *type* of unconscious content which is exerting its pathogenic influence: *The Quantitative Unconscious*—is the nexus I propose, around which the objective definition and diagnosis of mental illness will be accomplished, as well as, the exposure of the unconscious typology responsible for each particular case of mental pathology.

Add to this problem of objective diagnosis, the modern trend to serve our ease and see poorly, and then, believe our eyes. We are told, "You have a chemical imbalance, this pill will fix it." How easy is this to believe! The easy answer is always the most

seductive—and often, the least true. Although the neurotic surely displays a neural electro-chemical imbalance of some sort, it is only the rare case which sees this physiological reason as any sort of *cause*, instead, the reader must understand the following: The brain is a *causally bi-directional* electro-chemical system. Our thoughts are created within a physiological substrate—the nervous system, and in turn, we can see that our thoughts are but patterns of dynamic electro-chemistry, and the dynamic electro-chemistry of the nervous system is in turn, nothing but our thoughts. Therefore our thoughts can affect the electro-chemical configuration of processes which is the physiology of the brain, and vice versa. You see, the distinction between our body and mind is a false one, and, in fact, both are but representations of a unity, of the same exact thing! The division is one caused by the logical processes which dissect, not of reality, which is a unity. Of course, some rare cases of genetic malformation or physical damage can cause illness as a function of chemical imbalance, but, it is usually the other way around: the chemical imbalance just reflects distorted thinking. This means we can often change a "chemical imbalance" with different thinking...the idea being a hollow trivial one, as the two ideas, thought and mental neuro-chemical dynamism, are identical.

If the underlying mental construction which forms aberrant personality is left intact, it will always assert itself from under whatever chemical patch is laid upon the untreated wound. If the "chemical imbalance" is to be cured, its pathological effects and strain *cured*, rather than contained, the neuro-chemistry must be affected by way of addressing the cause: the malformed mental processes created in the formation and construction of personality. In brief: Only a psychoanalysis will do. For this reason the other aspect of the journal will be its focus on Native Psychoanalysis, my method of self-psychoanalysis. The journal will be online soon, bearing the title: *The Black Watch: The Journal of Unconscious Psychology and Self-Psychoanalysis*.

As I walked to water the garden it hit me: I am an idiot! The process of Native Psychoanalysis is my gem, my saving grace to be sure. I have used it to cure myself of a dread illness, and now I am free. My mind and spirit are the beneficiaries of all the energy and libido in the human hidden mind! But wait! This procedure was the single most excruciating and complex piece of thinking I have ever conceived, or...endured! It was nearly impossible to discover it, harder still to execute the procedure, and although effective to the hilt, and no drugs are needed, the procedure is most un-American: it is so very, *very painful!* No one will be able to understand it, and even more sure, no one will want to do it! All will take the pills. I am a fool! My altruistic efforts are in vain! Forget it! I will just keep it to myself. What is the point? Ah! What is the point of anything?

As an analyst I am sure that when I hear the strains of such moralizing, I probably hear a lie singing to me. I soon unmasked my self-deception and understood myself. How fantastic I feel! How I do love to write and use all this new energy to think! I love it! It just feels great! Ha! Now my despair vanishes and I see: my altruism is a facade for utter selfishness, and the more altruistic for it! I will write the journal, not to help anyone else, for that will bring me disappointment, and, it is a fake. I will do it because I can, and, because I like to do it—because it feels good! That way, if by coincidence, someone

wants to use the technique, or fund the scan, instead of keeping it to myself and brooding, it will be out there to do its job! My altruism is better served to be unmasked—as selfishness!—an honest boast. So I ask you: How blessed are the selfish? And as to the point:

Our soul is not a convolution, once born to ourselves, we rest and play all at once, without knowing. How golden is the day we can at last hear the quiet between our thoughts. My mind is smooth, as glass ripples under spilled light, and I turn on the pump, pattering and slow, steady and easy, the splash of the hose as a liquid jewel, clear and shining, sparkling and cool, a jewel most pure and precious...and all the garden is asleep. Slowly, I draw the liquid up and into the earthen wells, the corn soaking, holding in the damp earth, drinking in the day, and awakening...cool, spilling and clear—and all the world is a prayer, so soft and silent is her name, a sound heard between the noise, a whisper folded into the heart of sound, a pause we taste...but to linger...and know: The reason is here: held, in the silent places.

"As the Sun dips its finger into a pool of golden light, as the wind does caress its surface to glad ripples, as laughter shines from the easy careless places—so does the world fall into my eye, and breathe upon my grateful soul: as wind upon water."

References:

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Oregon resident Rich Norman, editor in chief of *The Journal of Unconscious Psychology*, is a writer and musician with degrees in philosophy and music. Known as "The Laughing Recluse," he is the author of books spanning philosophy, psychology, and novels, with topics ranging from psychoanalytic theory to existential philosophy, verse and fiction. All text in this column is printed with the permission of, and remains the sole property of, the author, Rich Norman. Contact: rich@richnorman.com