

THE MADNESS OF GEORGE W. BUSH:

A REFLECTION OF OUR COLLECTIVE PSYCHOSIS

by Paul Levy

One good thing I can say about President Bush is that he's gotten me interested in politics. Before he came to office, I was mainly interested in spiritual matters, and considered politics a "distraction." There was something playing out through George W. Bush as president, though, that not only caught my attention but strongly triggered something in me. In his campaign he promised us a foreign policy with humility, yet his actions seemed so arrogant, so full of hubris. I sensed a deep underlying incongruity, as if some unfinished psychological process was unconsciously enacting itself through him. The problem with this was that because of his position as president, his unconscious was playing itself out and being dramatized on the world stage, where it was negatively affecting the lives of billions of people. I saw that he was unwittingly evoking and literally creating more of the very situation that he was claiming to be fighting against. It is as if he is fighting against his own shadow, which is a battle that can never be won. There seems to be an element of craziness in it.

I would like to speak the marginalized voice. This voice can no longer be kept silent, as it is being emboldened by the endless destruction that the Bush Administration is causing. It is as if there is an elephant in the living room, and more and more people are pointing at it. The emperor has no clothes, and people are noticing. Situations like this, where someone's unconscious actions are causing great harm to others, literally demand to be named. There is a field of fear and cover-up that gets constellated around someone like George Bush that inhibits people from speaking the truth. This is analogous to how people were afraid to disagree with Bush after 9/11 for fear of being called terrorists. "You're either with us, or you're with the terrorists."

The truth now needs to be uttered. George W. Bush is ill. He has a psycho-spiritual disease of the soul, a sickness that is endemic to our culture and symptomatic of the times we live in. It's an illness that has been with us since time immemorial. Because it's an illness that's in the soul of all of humanity, it pervades the field and is in all of us in potential at any moment, which makes it especially hard to diagnose. Bush's malady is quite different from schizophrenia, for example, in which all the different parts of the personality are fragmented and not connected to each other, resulting in a state of internal chaos. As compared to the disorder of the schizophrenic, Bush can sound quite coherent and can appear like such a "regular," normal guy, which makes the syndrome he is suffering from very hard to recognize. This is because the healthy parts of his personality have been co-opted by the pathological aspect, which drafts them into its service. Because of the way the personality self-organizes an outer display of coherence around a pathogenic core, I would like to name Bush's illness "malignant egophrenic (as compared to schizophrenic) disorder," or "ME disorder," for short. If ME disorder goes unrecognized and is not contained, it can be very destructive, particularly if the person is in a position of power.

In much the same way that a child's psychology cannot be understood without looking at the family system he or she is a part of, George Bush does not exist in isolation. We can view Bush and his entire Administration (Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice, Ashcroft, Powell, Wolfowitz, etc), as well as the corporate, military industrial complex that they are co-dependently enmeshed with, the media that they control, the voters that support them, and ourselves as well, as interconnected parts of a whole system, or a "field." Instead of relating to any part of this field

as an isolated entity, it's important to contemplate the entire interdependent field as the "medium" through which malignant egophrenia manifests and propagates itself. ME disease is a field phenomenon, and needs to be contemplated as such. Bush's sickness is our own.

THE LIE

It is not that the threat of terrorism is not real, but that Bush's policies in dealing with terrorism are actually fueling the fire. A recent poll showed that the majority of Americans have finally recognized that the war in Iraq has actually increased the threat of terrorism. Talking about Bush's policies on terrorism and his pre-emptive invasion of Iraq, Al Gore says, "Instead of making it better, he has made it infinitely worse. We are less safe because of his policies.....the unpleasant truth is that President Bush's utter incompetence has made the world a far more dangerous place and dramatically increased the threat of terrorism against the United States." Bush totally fell into Bin Laden's trap. Bin Laden couldn't have imagined a better recruiting tool for terrorists than for Bush to invade Iraq. The way Bush is fighting terrorism is actually the very act which is invoking and creating more of it in the first place.

At the root of Bush's pathology is a deep dissociation. Like the terrorists, he has split-off from his own darker half, projecting the shadow "out there," and then tries to destroy this dis-owned shadow. By projecting the shadow onto each other, Bush and the terrorists are each seeing their own shadow reflected in the other. They see each other as criminals, as the incarnation of evil. By projecting the shadow like this, they locate the evil "out there," which insures that they don't have to recognize the evil within themselves. It's interesting to note that the inner meaning of the word mirror is "shadow holder." Ironically, by fighting against their own shadow in this way, they become possessed by the very thing they are trying to destroy, thereby perpetuating a never-ending cycle of violence. To quote C. G. Jung, one of the greatest psychologists of the twentieth century, "The psychological rule says that when an inner situation is not made conscious, it happens outside, as fate. That is to say, when the individual remains undivided [not in touch with both the light AND dark parts of themselves] and does not become conscious of his inner opposite, the world must perforce act out the conflict and be torn into opposing halves."

Symbolically, this is the repetition compulsion of the traumatized soul gone awry, to daemonic proportions, acting itself out on the world stage. To quote noted psychologist Rollo May, the daemonic is "any natural function which has the power to take over the whole person [or whole nation].....the daemonic can be either creative or destructive [i.e., demonic].....violence is the daemonic gone awry." The disease takes on a certain autonomy and literally possesses the person or group, as it is self-generating, self-perpetuating and self-organizing in nature, like a closed and negative feedback loop. The person who is taken over doesn't suspect a thing as the field secretly conspires and colludes with and enables their psychosis.

Jung simply refers to projecting the shadow as "the lie." It's interesting to note that one of the inner meanings of the word Devil is "the liar." Projecting the shadow, to quote Jung, "deprives us of the capacity to deal with evil." Jung stresses the importance of consciously developing what he calls one's "imagination for evil," which is to consciously recognize one's potential for evil. This recognition means embracing and integrating one's dark side into one's wholeness, which is made up of both light and dark. If we have no imagination for evil, to quote Jung, "evil has us in its grip.....for only the fool can permanently disregard the conditions of his own nature. In fact, this negligence is the best means of making him an instrument of evil."

By projecting the shadow, Bush is unwittingly being a conduit for the deepest, archetypal evil to possess him from behind, beneath his conscious awareness, and to act itself out through him. At the same time, ironically enough, he identifies with the light and imagines that he is divinely inspired. He then believes that any action he desires is justified in the name of God, as he can rationalize it as being God's will. Unable to self-reflect, he is convinced of the rightness of his viewpoint, which he considers non-negotiable. This is a very dangerous situation, as Bush has become unconsciously identified with and possessed by the hero, or savior archetype. This figure is religious in nature, as it derives from the transpersonal, archetypal dimension of the collective unconscious. Being inflated with the hero archetype, he (archetypically) wants to save the world from evil and to liberate the planet.

This is the height of irony since, in reality, Bush is acting as an unwitting conduit for evil by instigating wars and taking away people's freedoms. This incongruity brings into bold relief the severe schizoid split that characterizes Bush's condition. His inflation blinds him to the real consequences of his actions and is one of the easier to recognize aspects of his pathology. Being inflated due to an unconscious identification with an archetype is, in essence, an expression of having forfeited one's humanity, a state in which humility becomes impossible.

Bush has fallen into a state that is the embodiment of arrogance. Succumbing to the temptation of power, Bush has become corrupt, which is the inevitable consequence when one prefers power over truth. He has fallen into a vicious cycle where he has become addicted to power. Bush and his regime are compulsively driven to do everything and anything they can to hold onto the position of power they find themselves in. Not only do they not see the depraved nature of the situation they have fallen into, they don't want to see it. Being in the role of having power, there is a counter-incentive to self-reflect, which just reinforces the strength of the pathogen. As Al Gore mentioned, this is Bush's Faustian pact with the Devil.

Interestingly, as Freud pointed out, the Devil is symbolically related to the archetypal figure of the negative father. The negative patriarchy, the dark father (Darth Vader) is the deeper, mythic, archetypal process that has seized Bush and is unconsciously playing itself out through him. The negative father is a power-intoxicated devil, so to speak, that wants to control, dominate and dictate to others. Like a bully who is in a position of power and privilege, this figure abuses its power simply because it can. Because it is attached to the position of power it finds itself in, this figure is not interested in change, and therefore has become rigid, calcified and egocentric. As Bush told Tim Russert of "Meet the Press," "I'm not going to change." This figure is an expression of an old paradigm, macho ("bring 'em on") mentality whose MO is force. It does not learn from its mistakes, and has wounded, terrorized and killed millions over centuries. Seemingly strong and powerful on the surface, at the root of the figure of the terrible father is extreme fear and weakness, as it is threatened by anyone who challenges its dominance.

The archetypal role of the negative father that Bush embodies is a figure that exists deep inside of everyone. We're collectively living out the archetypal myth of the death of the negative patriarchy, which is symbolized by the myth of the old king who is in dire need of transformation. We have all dreamed up the Bush regime to play this out for us so that we can bring consciousness to this part of ourselves. The old king is dissociated from and threatened by Eros, from feeling, from the feminine, from the heart, from relatedness, even from mother nature and the environment (which it objectifies and tries to dominate, instead of being in relationship with), and from love. Concerned about nothing other than itself, this figure is indifferent to other people's suffering, all the while professing its compassion. It is a true wolf in sheep's clothing. Another name for the mythic negative father is ME disease.

At the root of Bush's process is an unwillingness and seeming inability to experience his own sense of sin, guilt and shame, as if he is afraid of being exposed, of being found out. He's

clearly unable to feel any remorse and experience his own weakness and vulnerability, his own sense of failure. This threatens his narcissism too much. This inability to experience his shame and guilt sets in motion a self-perpetuating cycle of denial, cover-up and projecting the shadow, all of which are based on a lie. Bush then falls into an endless loop of hiding from his own lie, which is to say, from himself. This process allows Bush to become a conduit for egophrenia to take him over and incarnate its malignant aspect through him.

Jung comments on this resistance to self-reflection and endless cycle of self-deception by saying "Hysterical self-deceivers, and ordinary ones too, have at all times understood the art of misusing everything so as to avoid the demands and duties of life, and above all to shirk the duty of confronting themselves. They pretend to be seekers after God in order not to have to face the truth that they are ordinary egoists."

Falling victim to one's own deception as Bush has can have a very mesmerizing and gripping effect on others, as he appears so convinced of what he is saying and is able to project this conviction. To quote Jung, "Nothing has such a convincing effect as a lie one invents and believes oneself." Bush has the seductive coherence of someone who is fanatically identified, like the typical fundamentalist, with only one side of a polarity. Thomas Merton, commenting on the case of the obviously demented Nazi war criminal, Adolf Eichmann, points out "One of the most disturbing facts that came out in the Eichmann trial was that a psychiatrist examined him and pronounced him perfectly sane." A key feature of malignant egophrenia is that it is very hard to recognize when someone is a carrier, because the person can seem so normal and even endearing. The person afflicted can be very "charming" and have a certain type of charisma that can entrance those who don't see through their subterfuge.

Just like Hitler struck a chord deep in the German unconscious, Bush is touching something very deep in the American psyche. Bush is acting out on the world stage an under-developed psychological process that deals simplistically with issues such as good and evil. It's as if he hasn't grown out of and fully differentiated from the realm of mythic, archetypal fantasy that is typical of early adolescence. This immature aspect of Bush's process speaks to and resonates with those voters who support him, as it is a reflection of their own under-developed inner process.

Whereas Hitler's evil was more overt in its cruelty and sadism, Bush's dark side is much more hidden and disguised, which makes it particularly dangerous. People who vote for Bush are somehow blind to what is very obvious to others. It's as if they've become hypnotized and fallen under the spell that Bush is casting. Why would people vote for someone stricken with malignant egophrenia? People who support Bush are suggestible and susceptible to the same malady that Bush is embodying, as if they have a predisposition for it (based on their own trauma, dissociated psyche and tendency to project the shadow). Supporting Bush is a sign that a person not only doesn't see the deadly illness that is incarnating itself through Bush, but is an expression that this disease has taken up residence in their being and is using them to do its bidding.

THE DISEASE IS NON-LOCAL

Being a field phenomenon, malignant egophrenia is non-local in nature, which means that it is not bound by the limitations of time or space. Being non-local, this disease pervades and underlies the entire field and can therefore manifest anywhere, through anyone and at any moment. The disease's non-local nature makes the question of who has the disease irrelevant, as we all have it in potential. It is more a question of whether or not we are aware of our susceptibility to fall prey to the disease. This awareness itself serves as an immunization that

protects us from the pernicious effects of the illness, thereby allowing us to be of genuine help to others.

Bush, like all of us, is both a manifestation of this deeper field and simultaneously an agent affecting this field. He's become so fully taken over by the disease, all the while not suspecting a thing, that he's become a "carrier" for this deadly disease, thus infecting the field around him. He's become a portal through which the field around him "warps" in such a way as to feed and support his pathogenic process. A non-local, reciprocally co-arising and interdependent field of unconscious denial and cover-up gets constellated around Bush to enable and protect his pathology.

People who don't recognize Bush's illness and support him are colluding with and enabling in the co-creation of the pathological field that is birthing itself through him into the human family. People who support Bush become unwitting agents through which this non-local disease feeds and replicates itself. By supporting Bush they are collaborating with and becoming parts of the greater, interconnected and self-organizing field of the disease.

The situation is very analogous to when seemingly good, normal, loving Germans supported Hitler, believing he was a good leader trying to help them. The German people didn't realize that the virulent pathogen malignant egophrenia had taken possession of Hitler and was incarnating itself through him. By not seeing this and supporting Hitler, they became agents used by this non-local, deadly disease to propagate itself. This was a collective psychosis, and this is what is taking place in our country right now.

This is exactly what Jung was warning us about when he said "The gigantic catastrophes that threaten us today are not elemental happenings of a physical or biological order, but psychic events. To a quite terrifying degree we are threatened by wars and revolutions which are nothing other than psychic epidemics. At any moment several millions of human beings may be smitten with a new madness, and then we shall have another world war or devastating revolution. Instead of being at the mercy of wild beasts, earthquakes, landslides, and inundations, modern man is battered by the elemental forces of his own psyche."

A COLLECTIVE PSYCHOSIS

Malignant egophrenia is crazy-making. It induces a very hard to recognize form of insanity. It's a world where up is down, as its flawless illogic is convoluted and inverted at its core. People with egophrenia do not recognize the mirror-like nature of reality, so they accuse other people of doing what they themselves are doing. For example, Bush is talking about himself when he accuses Saddam Hussein of being "a man who has defied the world," and "a man who has made the United Nations look foolish." When we fall prey to egophrenia, we are unable to recognize that we are taken over, as we become bewitched by our own projections. Part of the disease is that when we point at it and call it by its true name - as being a form of insanity called ignorance - people who are stricken with the disease will see us as the one's who are crazy. Unless we recognize the insidious nature of this disease, there is a crazy-making field around it that will make us a part of itself. Collective psychosis is like that.

There is only one reason why the mainstream psychiatric community is not studying this contagious psychosis as it spreads through Bush, his regime, and the surrounding field. They are not studying this disease because they haven't yet recognized that the disease even exists. To the extent that any of us are unaware that this non-local pathogen pervades the field we become hooked by it through our own unconscious blind-spot. By not recognizing the nature of the disease, the mental health community becomes its unwitting agents, helping the disease to

propagate. What clearer sign do we need of a collective psychosis than when our mental health system itself, whose job it is to monitor such phenomenon, not only doesn't recognize that there is a collective psychosis running rampant in our society, but are themselves infected with it?

The DSM-IV, the psychiatric diagnostic manual, is continually expanding and including new diagnoses as we deepen our understanding of and map the contours of the human psyche. The problem is that the DSM-IV is an expression of an "old paradigm" way of thinking in that it looks at mental illness as it exists in individuals, regarding the individual as an object existing separate from the field around them. This is based on an illusion, for the individual is embedded in the greater field (family system, society, and planetary culture) and is an expression of this multi-textured field. The individual and the field around them interpenetrate and condition each other so fully that they can't even be regarded as two separate aspects that have become joined together, but rather must be seen as inseparable parts of a greater whole. Egophrenia expresses itself non-locally throughout the entire field. Consequently, instead of being viewed through the lens of the fragmented, separate self, it requires a more holistic vision that recognizes the existence of the interdependently co-arising field. It's not a question of integrating ME disease into the existing DSM-IV, but instead of radically expanding, up-leveling and re-visioning our understanding of the nature of illness itself.

It's profoundly important that the mental health community at large recognize this age-old disease with which we are all afflicted. Doing this changes this community from being part of the problem to part of the solution. The disease literally feeds on our unawareness of it. The recognition of the disease is itself the beginning of the cure. By recognizing the nature of this collective psychosis, we snap out of being part of it. Malignant egophrenia, unrecognized and misdiagnosed until now, has wreaked havoc all throughout human history, and is at the very root of our current world crisis. To the extent we are unaware of the nature of this collective psychosis, it has us in its grips and will unconsciously get acted out through us in a destructive manner. The choice is truly ours.

One of the signatures of ME disease is that it hooks people through their unconscious blind-spot, so when people are afflicted by this deadly disease they are truly asleep to what is getting acted out through them. Bush himself is being manipulated, used and victimized, like a marionette on a string, by a deeper matrix of cover-up and deceit that has been perpetrated by him and his very regime, and has now taken on an autonomous life of its own. This disease, if it gets out of control, means self-destruction for both victim and perpetrator. There are no winners. The entire interconnected web that supports Bush can be recognized to be tentacles of this virulent, non-local pathogen that, to the extent that it is not seen, is potentially gaining more and more sovereignty. Like a sci-fi movie, we have dreamed up a higher-dimensional Frankenstein monster that has taken on a life of its own and truly threatens all of us.

MALIGNANT NARCISSISM

Psychologically speaking, one facet of Bush's condition is what is called "malignant narcissism." This is a narcissist who reacts to others who don't support and enable their narcissism not just with aggression but with sadism. I've never seen so many books come out by members of a presidential administration that hold up a mirror and reflect our president's shadow. Instead of self-reflecting and taking in the critical feedback, the Bush administration reacts like a mean-spirited malignant narcissist behaves- by denying the accusation and then by trying to destroy the messenger.

Malignant narcissists also tend towards paranoia and are very adept at charming and manipulating others. They can seem confident and self-assured, but are, in reality, covering deep insecurities and fears through an inflated self-image. Malignant narcissists are unable to genuinely mourn or feel empathy for others and have an overwhelming lack of genuine compassion. They relate to others (including the environment) as objects to satisfy and support their own inflated, narcissistic self-image (so much for "compassionate conservatism"). Malignant narcissists have contempt for anyone who disagrees with them (as it threatens their narcissism). For example, the Bush Administration labels those who disagree with them as being "un-American," "unpatriotic," and as we have seen in more extreme cases "terrorists."

Malignant narcissists also have contempt for and flagrantly violate the rule of law, which they believe themselves to be above. Thai intellectual and social critic Sulak Sivaraksa likens Bush to two other malignant narcissists, Hitler and Stalin, arguing that Bush's declaration of an "axis of Evil," Hitler's "Final Solution," and Stalin's "pogrom of peasants" were actually analogous attempts "to perfect the world by destroying the [perceived] impurities." Another modern day malignant narcissist is none other than Saddam Hussein.

THE PALE CRIMINAL

The great German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche talked about an extremely pathological condition that he called the "pale criminal," which is a chillingly accurate description of Bush that adds even more insight into his psychiatric profile. Jung felt that the pale criminal idea of Nietzsche was so profound that he referred to it in articulating a particular type of malevolent personality disorder. To quote Jung, the pale criminal "simply will not and cannot admit the he is what he is; he cannot endure his own guilt, just as he could not help incurring it. He will stoop to every kind of self-deception if only he can escape the sight of himself....which consists essentially in one hand not knowing what the other is doing, in wanting to jump over one's own shadow, and in looking for everything dark, inferior and culpable in others....but since nobody can jump out of his skin and be rid of himself, they stand in their own way everywhere as their own evil spirit." Jung continues that the pale criminal's unconscious identification with one side of the polarity, his "God Almightyness, that is to say all those qualities which are peculiar to fools and madmen and therefore lead to catastrophe.....merely fills him with arrogance and arouses everything evil in him. It produces a diabolical caricature of man, and this inhuman mask is so unendurable, such a torture to wear, that he tortures others.....disrupts the laws of humanity, and sins against all the rules of the human community....he has to keep his crime secret....he is the most violent breaker of the bond of the human community."

Nietzsche referred to this individual as a "pale" criminal because if this person were to self-reflect and look in the mirror, they would have their breath taken away at seeing who they have become, and would become pale at the sight of themselves. This figure is an embodiment of what Jung would call the "statistical criminal" that lives inside of all of us in a state of potential, and that can manifest under the right conditions. The Bush administration is breaking the moral code, the law of the planet, what Thomas Jefferson called "a decent respect for the opinion of mankind." It's important to see through our naïve illusions and recognize that what the Bush regime is doing is truly criminal.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMING THE DISEASE

Malignant egophrenia is both an expression of and at the root of the extreme polarization and dissociation in both the human psyche and the world process at large. We can even say that it's the "bug" in the system that has in-formed and given shape to all of the conflict and disharmony of human relationship. ME disease is as old as the human species. However, we're now at the point in our evolution where we can finally recognize it, see it, give it a name and diagnose it.

Malignant egophrenia is truly diabolical in nature and is what the ancient, indigenous cultures would call a demon. Jung warned us that a difficult task lay ahead of us after the mass insanity of the second World War. He points out that after the "demons" abandoned the German people, these negative energies weren't banished. To quote Jung "the demons will seek a new victim. And that won't be difficult. Every man who loses his shadow, every nation that falls into self-righteousness, is their prey." Projecting the shadow literally opens the door for malignant egophrenia to take up residence in our being. Jung calls these demons "autonomous complexes," which are split-off parts of the psyche that can possess a person and seemingly develop an independent will and quasi-life of their own. These autonomous complexes can't stand to be seen in much the same way a vampire can't stand the light. Malignant egophrenia will shape-shift and do everything in its power to resist being seen. It's elusive, mercurial and very much a trickster. The disease obfuscates itself, creating any number of distractions to hide behind, and will even react violently to being seen, for being seen takes away its omnipotence and autonomy.

When we see a demon we know its name. Naming it is exorcistic, as it dis-spells the demon's power over us. To name something is to symbolize it. The word "symbolic," which means that which unites, is the antidote and antonym to the word "diabolic," which means that which divides and separates. George Bush claimed to be "a uniter, not a divider." However, he has only united one thing- the entire world against us. To see this diabolical aspect of what is coming through Bush, namely, that he is an instrument that is creating separation, is itself to be seeing with symbolic awareness.

Naming the disease, we are able to (alchemically) contain it, so that it can't possess us from behind and act itself out through us unconsciously. Once the disease is named, it's anchored to consciousness so that it can't vaporize back into the unconscious. This de-potentiates the disease, beginning the process of re-integrating it back into the profound unity of the psyche. The energy that was bound up in the compulsion to endlessly re-create the disease becomes liberated and available for creative expression. The prescription for this disease is simply for enough of us who see it to connect with each other in lucid awareness so that it can be contained, metabolized and healed. This is an evolutionary impulse from the universe in which we are invited to participate.

Encoded in the disease is its own medicine. Hidden in the daemonic is our guiding spirit, our true genius and inner voice. This is why Jung calls the daemonic the "not yet made real creative." The fact that such a dark shadow is emerging in our world is an expression that light is nearby, as shadows are themselves an expression of light. Demons are actually blessings in drag. Lucifer is truly the bringer of light.

IS THE DISEASE A BLESSING OR A CURSE?

ME disease is unique in that it collapses the boundary between inner and outer. Egophrenia is an inner disease of the soul that expresses itself via the medium of the outside world. Malignant egophrenia is manifesting itself, both literally and symbolically, hidden yet visible for all who have eyes to see, simultaneously veiling and revealing itself. Symbolically

encoded in egophrenia's literal manifestation is the key to its re-solution. Symbols are the language of dreams. A symbol brings together and reconciles two contraries into a greater whole. A symbol reflects and effects a change in and of consciousness itself. A symbol is both the expression of as well as the doorway into a more transcendent, higher-dimensional part of ourselves.

People don't see egophrenia because they don't recognize the symbolic dimension of existence, but rather are absorbed in the literal dimension of reality. It is very convincing to (only) take things literally and see these literal facts as "the (one) truth," as events in this world ARE literally happening. They're as real as real can be. This can be very entrancing, particularly with the evidence right in front of our face. People are dying. Seeing symbolically doesn't negate the literal dimension of this but instead complements and completes it, as both are true simultaneously. The literal and symbolic dimensions of reality interpenetrate each other so fully that they can't be seen as two separate things that are joined together, but rather are interdependent parts of a greater whole. The birth of symbolic awareness not only more fully completes our picture of the nature of the universe we live in, but gives us access to the way to actually deal with this deadly disease. Egophrenia is truly initiatory, as it is a wake up call to symbolic awareness, which is a higher dimension of our being. All that is needed for malignant egophrenia to reveal its blessing is for us to recognize its revelatory function.

Jung says "Everything could be left undisturbed did not the new way demand to be discovered, and did it not visit humanity with all the plagues of Egypt until it finally is discovered." Malignant egophrenia is a modern day plague of Egypt. If we don't see what it is symbolically revealing to us, malignant egophrenia will destroy us. It's a gesture from the universe, beckoning us, demanding us to integrate it and thereby receive its blessing. By prompting, pressuring and challenging us to come to terms with it and receive its gifts, malignant egophrenia has the potential to awaken us, thereby furthering the evolution of the species.

Seeing the symbolic nature of malignant egophrenia is to see that it is both a deadly disease and the highest blessing co-joined in one phenomenon. Is it a wave or a particle? It is a true "coincidentia oppositorum," a conjunction of opposites, an expression of divinity. The question is, do we recognize what is being symbolically shown to us by egophrenia, or not? The inner meaning of the word apocalypse is "something hidden being revealed." Will these apocalyptic end times we are in be an initiation into a more expansive part of our being? Or will it destroy our species? How it will manifest completely depends on us.

The fact that malignant egophrenia is manifesting in fully visible form in our world right now is an expression that this particular energy is available for assimilation in a way that was unimaginable until now. When an unconscious content is ready to be integrated, it always gets dreamed up into fully materialized form. This is the dimension in which the energy bound up in the infinitely regressing feedback loop of the disease can be accessed and redeemed. If we can make use of its lessons, ME disease becomes a portal into a more whole and integrated part of our being. It is a potential blessing in a very convincing disguise that it's not.

Being a non-local field phenomenon, the malignant egophrenia epidemic is something all six billion of us are collaboratively creating and dreaming up together. Bush is an embodied, mirrored reflection of a part of ourselves, just like we, reciprocally, are a reflection of a part of him. His disease is our disease. Bush and his regime are a living embodied reflection of our collective shadow. We have all dreamed them up to play out these roles, in full living color, so that we can see and integrate these parts of ourselves. To see this is to recognize our true face in the disease, which liberates its blessing aspect. Like Christ says in the Gnostic Gospels "I am a mirror (shadow holder) to you that know me." Compassion spontaneously arises when we recognize these fear-ridden parts of ourselves.

GENUINE COMPASSION AS ACTIVISM

The malignant egophrenia epidemic is happening right in front of us, for all who have eyes to see. If we don't look at what's happening, if we turn away, ignore it, and contract against it, we are lying to ourselves. Then we're colluding with and unknowingly feeding the disease. Our looking away is a form of blindness. Our looking away is a form of ignorance. Our looking away, our contraction, IS itself the disease. Our resulting complacency and inaction is, in fact, an expression of our lack of compassion. To quote Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. "One who passively accepts evil [allowing it to happen] is as much involved in it as the one who perpetrates it."

There is a great danger when we see evil, though. To quote Jung, "It is a fact that cannot be denied: the wickedness of others becomes our own wickedness because it kindles something evil in our hearts....the sight of evil kindles evil in the soul." Malignant egophrenia forces upon us the responsibility to come to terms with the evil inside our own hearts. If we solidify Bush as being evil and react with righteous indignation, we are guilty of the very same thing we're accusing Bush of (i.e, projecting the shadow). We then become a conduit for the very evil we're reacting to. Who among us has not been guilty of being a channel for ME disease at one time or another? If, when we see this virulent pathogen, we contract against it and react in any way, be it in judgment, hatred, anger or revulsion, we're helping to perpetuate the diabolical polarization that is the signature of the disease. Our reacting in this way, which is typical of many political activists, is itself an expression that we ourselves have the disease, or to say it more clearly, the disease has us.

This disease literally has the potential to humble us. We may think- not us, we could never catch this disease. However, this very arrogance opens us up to being hooked by the pathogen. We may think- let's step out of our arrogance, for who are we to know anything? Let's be an enlightened bodhisattva and not judge what Bush is doing, for who are we to judge? Or let's be an enlightened psychiatrist and not diagnose, name or pathologize Bush in any way, for we don't want to cast any spells. However, to have these attitudes is to fall under the seductive spell of the bug, causing us to disconnect from and give away our power. In this way, we forsake one of our greatest spiritual treasures, the act of discernment. Being a spiritual warrior embraces and includes the most extreme discernment, which is the ability to differentiate and is a function of seeing clearly. Discernment is different that when we are unconsciously caught in judgement, which is a reaction to and contraction against something. Wielding the wisdom of discernment is an expression of having genuine compassion.

Compassion is sometimes fierce, though. Sometimes it says "no," and sets a boundary. Genuine compassion is not always smiley-faced, otherwise known as "idiot compassion," which just enables and reinforces asleepness. Genuine compassion is not passive. It propels us to act for the benefit of all beings. True compassion demands us to be willing to consciously step into our power, mediated through the heart, and to find the courage to speak our true voice: The malignant egophrenia epidemic has induced a form of criminal insanity in the entire Bush regime that we are all complicit in by allowing it to happen.

To quote Thomas Jefferson "Dissent is the highest form of patriotism." To quote Thomas Paine "It is the duty of the patriot to protect his country from his government." Being truly patriotic and compassionate in our current situation involves doing everything and anything we can, however big or small, to remove Bush and his regime from office, for their good, as well as our own.

We, as a people, need to recognize the severity of the crisis our country is in. And then we need to act. It's an extremely dangerous situation that a person who is possessed by the virulent pathogen malignant egophrenia happens to be in the commander's seat of the most powerful country in the world. What's more, he's steering the ship to shipwreck, or as the retired Marine Corps General Anthony Zinni, who headed Central Command before becoming President Bush's personal emissary to the Middle East, put it, "over Niagara Falls." With Bush as president it's as if we're in a car going over the speed limit being driven by a drunk adolescent who has fallen asleep at the wheel. It's our responsibility as awake adults to recognize our situation and to do something about it. If not, if we continue to passively and helplessly watch what is playing out in front of our very eyes, then we have no one to blame but ourselves. This is what Al Gore was trying to tell us in his speech when he ended with the quote by Abraham Lincoln, "We- even we here- hold the power, and bear the responsibility." Now is the time to act before it is too late. As the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. says "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

A healer, Paul Levy is a spiritual and political activist. He is in private practice, helping other people who are also spiritually awakening to the dream-like nature of reality. He can be reached at paul@awakeninthedream.com. Please feel free to pass this article along to a friend if you feel so inspired.

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