

---

foreign hey everyone it's been a while since I posted a video here  
hope your 2023 is

going great now if you've been watching this channel for a while then  
you know that sometimes

I like to get into some controversial topics and here's another one

this is on the issue or rather the social epidemic of pathologizing  
people

pathologizing each other and I think you've probably noticed this

particular issue but I want to explain why it's more troubling than  
you might

think and why it's so important to correct and what a significant  
part

understanding this plays in one's spiritual and contemplative life

so let's dive in and please share this video with friends

there's a great psychologist and Ted speaker named guy winch who  
rightly suggests that our society and culture is

so focused on the health of the physical body that we largely neglect  
the health

of the mind to our great detriment we teach our children how to clean  
and

bandage a cut and that they must brush their teeth every day but we  
teach them nothing about

emotional hygiene well maybe you do but in general as a

society children are not taught the basics of emotional hygiene is a  
daily practice in the way that they are taught

---

physical hygiene so we could Define emotional hygiene as the importance of reframing and healing

painful emotional experiences on a daily basis

now the fact that we're not attending to this as a normal part of Education of

young people no longer makes any sense our ability to care for our bodies is

far out distanced our ability to care for our minds

speaking of both young people and adults of all ages our ability to manage physical resources

has progressed so far that as of just the last 10 years for the first time in history a randomly selected human on earth is more likely to die

from obesity than from starvation that's never been true in the whole of

human history until now but our emotional Acumen has not

progressed similarly for the first time in history

it's also the case that a randomly selected human on earth is more likely

to die by Suicide than be murdered or killed in war

so look at these two statistics next to each other both major

changes vis-a-vis the whole history of the human species for the first time someone's more likely to die of obesity

than starvation means uh there's an abundance of physical resources at least

---

in most countries but people are more likely to commit

suicide than be killed in war so our mental health and our ability to manage

resources in such a way is to enhance our mental health has not progressed in

the same way of course the latter statistic is also because we have managed to reduce the

number of people killed in war in the last 50 years um

but still the fact remains that statistically speaking you are in more

Danger from yourself than anyone else in the 21st century so let's wake up

sit up and pay attention because humanity is at a Tipping Point

indeed several tipping points it's time we pay much more attention to

the non-physical aspects of our existence without which we cannot survive because

it's precisely those non-physical aspects that affect the physical aspects for example are out of control and

rampant consumerism is rooted in spiritual and psychological malaise and

that very consumerism is what is decimating the planet so it's actually very wise to say let's

pay more attention to the non-physical aspects of our existence which are impacting everything

so if we pay attention to cultural trends that cause mental emotional

suffering as much as we do to physical pathogens that cause physical

---

suffering

then we immediately see that we have a lot of growing up to do and that Humanity consists in the main of

overgrown children which is hardly surprising since none of

us are taught by parents or schools how to grow up

but still we have even the leaders of Nations acting like overgrown children

let alone everyone else so one of the ways in which this

immaturity expresses is through over generalizing one's values that is

believing that how you want things to be is how they should be objectively

believing that your preferences correspond somehow to moral absolutes

for example you want everyone to be kind to each other and you enjoy witnessing

kindness so you believe people should be kind it's the right thing to do

now I happen to share this value with you but this and all such values are not

properties of the objective world personally I love and value kindness

more than just about anything but a little education in history shows that

all moral values are culturally constructed and culturally contingent

for example if we look at the moral values enshrined in Hammurabi's Code

3800 years ago we see that in Babylonian Society children were considered

property so if someone killed your son the right and just punishment was to

execute his son now everyone in that Society agreed that

that was the right and just response to the crime though we consider it barbaric

now we don't consider it barbaric to imprison or execute the men who killed

your son though probably future humans will consider it barbaric because

Neuroscience increasingly demonstrates that it's false to believe that a killer

chose to kill and he could have chosen otherwise rather each human is at the mercy of

their mental conditioning and brain chemistry and could not have chosen other than as they did at the time

which Discovery leads us to a much more compassionate view of criminals

to have your mind blown on this subject please look up the amazing article the

brain on trial by David Eagleman a great researcher in neuroscience

okay I propose that one of the most harmful mental

emotional epidemics in our society today is normativity and the flip side of the

same coin which is pathologization so I'll Define these terms

---

normativity

is the belief that there are ways humans ought to behave

and that behavior outside that realm is wrong

people should tell the truth marriage should be between a man and a woman

people shouldn't kill each other so on and so forth

normativity seems to work fine when everyone agrees on something

for example everyone agrees that murder of a private citizen by a private citizen should be illegal and and

prosecuted but at the same time most people agree that our governments can drop bombs at

will on foreign civilians with or without a declaration of war

so so it's not so clear-cut actually these

uh values and of course there are issues in which most people don't agree there is no

consensus like abortion so what I really want you to notice

though is that the things that you value you think should be normative should be

um either forced on others or people should be pressured to behave in that way but

you don't think that should happen for the values of those people that you

disagree with but how would you ever adjudicate that moral values being

relative and not absolute not rooted in objective reality

---

um now it's the 21st century globalized and pluralistic era and we're constantly

forced to confront compelling sorry we're constantly forced to confront

competing and irreconcilable Frameworks of normativity

for example the American framework and the islamist the American political

right and the left these are irreconcilable uh

value propositions and normativity is simply not workable

in a pluralistic globalized world without endless fighting of one kind or

another we'll have to dispense with it and replace it with a completely different system in order to survive as

a species but right now I'm most interested in how

normativity is harming humans on the interpersonal level since I see it

almost every day certainly on the internet and also in real space

so let's take an example most people watching this video can agree that

heteronormativity is harmful because it expresses as the pathologization of all

lgbtq people and gender fluid non-binary people

but most people watching this video will likely not agree that pathologization of trump supporters is equally harmful

to the fabric of American American society but I propose it is

---

now pathologization is a mental framework that comes into play when you believe that there must be something

wrong with someone who doesn't behave as you would like

for example um some people still think that homosexuality is a mental illness and

many people who oppose Trump and his supporters believe that his supporters

have much lower IQs on average um and

this is a form of pathologization as well and we can't have it both ways

if other people pathologizing those who don't fit their normative beliefs are

wrong and harmful then so are you whenever you

pathologize people who don't fit your normative beliefs

it's never going to work to say your normativity is wrong but mine is right

never in a million years we've already seen the vituperative and

violent reactions from those on the right to the moral judgments of those on

the left those judgments are not succeeding in bringing about the goals of the people

making the judgments if we want to see Humanity relinquish its immaturity and collectively grow up

we all need to do our part as long as normativity and

pathologization is a third person problem that is what those people



---

are doing is

wrong then nothing's going to change it has to be seen as a first person problem

so the change starts with me and it starts with you

you of course being the first person from your own perspective

now I invite you to investigate the countless subtle ways in which you say

to others you're not as you should be in our society now we see a frightening

trend of people diagnosing each other with psychological disorders like narcissists sociopath borderline

personality terms only properly used by licensed mental health professionals

this is pathologization of the most obvious kind explaining your challenges

in a relationship in terms of an imagined evaluation of what's wrong with

the other person this is tragic for many reasons viewing

human beings primarily in terms of what you think is wrong with them is fundamentally dehumanizing it leads

on the social level to mistreatment of criminals and on the interpersonal level

to mistreatment of your exes or whoever it's the same phenomenon

but pathologizing others is also harmful to you because it's disempowering to you if the

problems in your relationship are really due to the other person's

---

pathology then there's nothing you can do about it

but what if you translated every compulsive Act of pathologization

into an honest assessment of your own feelings needs and values

thank you Marshall Rosenberg for example he's a narcissist translates to I want

him to decenter himself and consider others needs more than I've seen him do

that's the truth isn't it why not speak the truth instead of your diagnosis of

the other person there's nothing wrong of course with your needs your desires your values but

when you consciously or subconsciously hold the belief that others should share

your values or should meet your needs then you are

engaging in normative thinking that will inevitably Express as pathologization

you are participating in the same Dynamic which is threatening to tear our

society apart

objectively there's no such thing as a selfish person

there's no such thing as a narcissist or a sociopath or any other pathological category they

are fabricated categories they are mental constructs they may or may not be

useful mental constructs but we must acknowledge that they are mental constructs

---

now in the case of you know psychological categories you can easily see their constructedness by just reviewing the history of the American Psychiatric associations

Diagnostic and statistical Manual of mental disorders known as the DSM

changed radically over the last 50 years going through Edition after Edition has

some things that were formally considered mental illness aren't anymore and new mental illnesses are added and

the definitions of existing mental illnesses are altered to reflect our

changing understanding of not only human psychology but also the changing trends

of what is considered normal in a society which fabricates the

concept of normal and what constitutes acceptable deviation from it so I hope

you can see that this is problematic right just 50 years ago

or a little less it was still homosexuality was still listed as a

mental illness in the official Diagnostic and statistical Manual of American psychiatrists so what is there

now that will cause shaking of heads 50 years from now

undoubtedly many things so this helps us

see the constructedness of these categories and that the categories are only useful if they actually result in

helping people if they actually result in mitigation of suffering but

---

these

categories are easily weaponized as well so I would argue that there's no such

thing as a normal person and there's no such thing as a normal

psyche yes there's a bell curve of

neurotypicality but the term normal is well normative and therefore hegemonic

it's it's used as an instrument for cultural and interpersonal oppression

normal is a cultural construct designed to express our culturally contingent

values around how people should behave

and indeed if people stopped um trying to make themselves appear

normal if people stopped suppressing the aspects of their personality that

they're afraid others will view as abnormal then we would see the true diversity

of human psychology and human behavior which we currently are not because the

vast majority of people are actively hiding behavioral traits or ways of thinking

that they are afraid others will judge so therefore we're not clearly seeing

yet as a society that normal really is uh a cultural construct and a mental

construct not um something in human nature

---

now having said all that uh I I need to acknowledge that some people can feel a

kind of profound relief upon diagnosing a loved one with a psychological

condition now of course it's much better if they get a diagnosis from a psychiatric

professional but if you're a compassionate person it

could be that diagnosing somebody can help you accept them again you're not

qualified to make that diagnosis unless you're a licensed mental health professional but still

um you know reading some internet articles and making the diagnosis in some cases is helpful because it helps

you accept the person as they are and releases you from the false belief that

they could be different from how they are but it's dangerous right first of all such a

diagnosis is a mental crutch you know the story about them may have some beneficial effects such as

acceptance and compassion but it may also cause you to look down on them pity

them see them as broken instead of a uniquely whole human

right you might start to infantilize them or treat them with less respect

um it's a it's a these diagnoses we make of

other people serve to alienate us from them in one way or another

---

whether we're demonizing

them or infantilizing them now it's more difficult

but it's also more fruitful to accept humans as they are without a concocted

diagnosis or story about them and to accept that a whole human can and will

make decisions you don't like and exhibit behavior you find difficult or

offensive what would it be like to give up

normativity and pathologization totally

Fair it out every single way you pathologize others and to translate each

of those mental frames into your very real feelings needs and values

what would it be like to express your feelings needs and values to everyone in your life without holding the oppressive

belief that they should share your values or should meet your needs

what if you woke up to the fact that every should is nothing but a

mental construct a fabrication that humans use to manipulate others and

pressure themselves into modes of behavior that their society or family of

origin has arbitrarily decided or normal or right

how would that change your life

what if you stopped seeing your partner's emotions or your own as negative or positive what if you stopped

---

seeing your feelings and needs as problems to be solved

they're not what if you stopped believing that anyone is other than as they should be

and that the rate at which they change and grow however slow

is anything other than perfect for them

how would that change your life I can tell you how it's changed my life

it's unleashed the profound Joy of accepting humans as they are

and to open the heart of compassion it's allowed me to grieve and heal around Behavior I've found painful

and it's given me the experience of unconditional love for the majority of

humans I encounter now I know what some of you are thinking

what about issues like racism and white supremacy surely we are right to

pathologize racists to which I answer no

there is no benefit to calling a person racist as opposed to calling an action

or a thought racist it does not Advance the cause of

eliminating racism one iota to call a person a racist

think about this have you ever seen someone waking up to the harmful impact

of some of their actions due to being called a racist never

it doesn't work we can talk about the problem of white

supremacy in detail without pathologizing individual humans

we can talk about actions and attitudes which are racist without harmfully

diminishing the humanity of a complex being by calling him a racist or her if you diagnose and pathologize others

you're demonizing them and by so doing you make yourself into a demon many of us have

you know pathologized to the other side over the last years as political

divisiveness increases but the sad truth is hating haters makes us haters too there is no moral High Ground in condemning or pathologizing others

individually or on Mass by doing so we diminish ourselves as well as them but now it's time to turn it around and

enjoy the good news if you wake up to the culturally constructed nature of

normativity that necessarily includes the realization that there is nothing

wrong with you and there never was

every sense of your own inadequacy or wrongness is nothing but internalized

cultural programming I'll say that again every sense of your own inadequacy or

wrongness is nothing but internalized cultural programming



people pathologized your behavior from the time you could understand language

in accordance with their culturally constructed or culturally conditioned

normative views and that's what generated this baseless

self-hatred and self-criticism

all normativity is made up there's no way a human should be

your soul to lie there's just how we are

the universe didn't get it wrong sometimes it hurts to be human to be a

little different from others perhaps but there's nothing wrong with pain

either it's okay to feel whatever you feel

how could it not be it's okay to need whatever you need

nobody has an obligation to meet your needs of course and you have no

obligation to meet theirs the idea of obligation is also made up

but your needs are valid whatever they are thankfully fulfillment is not contingent

on getting all your needs met and happiness is not the result of getting

everything you think you want realizing that is exactly what brings us

to the spiritual path so it's okay to Value whatever you value

but if you hold the belief that others should share your values

you're causing harm I don't care what your values are

still causes harm if you hold the belief as well that others should meet your

needs then you will cause harm if you haven't already and if you think about it for a human

being it's really challenging to cause less harm than benefit

on balance across a whole human lifetime

really challenging but what better aspiration could there be than to cause

at least a little more joy than harm with your precious human life

it's not easy but it's worth a try if you share that aspiration there's no

better way I know to fulfill it than to wake up to the made upness of all

normative thinking and Purge all pathologization of

yourself and others from your being

what if you gave all beings their freedom to be exactly as they are

your family your children your in-laws your neighbors

etc etc if you give all beings their freedom to

be exactly as they are you find that you yourself have become

truly free

when you've made this shift out of normative thinking

you're living in a different world a rebooted world you're a human

---

adult

we might say they're there are not many of those in existence

yet we could but everyone counts

how does an adult react to someone behaving in hurtful ways

well she doesn't need to pathologize the other she just says hey you know that

hurts and it would really contribute to my well-being and maybe others if you

would take a look at how you're impacting me and others and maybe you'll see for yourself that this behavior that

others find painful might not contribute to your well-being either

that's a sane adult response to upsetting or painful

behavior in others and if the other person doesn't listen to this response Well a true adult still

doesn't pathologize them she just moves further away from them

emotionally physically or both nobody chose their conditioning

so nobody's wrong for how their minds are conditioned

they literally can't help it and nobody chooses the degree of their

capacity for change either they have whatever capacity they do

if you don't like how people are that doesn't mean they are fundamentally wrong

but of course that doesn't mean you shouldn't speak up and let them know your feelings needs and values either

and this is where the Mind plays a weird trick on us if the Mind

---

finally accepts that it's

right for everyone to be exactly as they are in this moment because they can't be otherwise then for some reason it thinks

it loses the right to speak up to object to say hey that hurts me could you please stop

but there is nothing in this state of total acceptance of human nature

that suggests you shouldn't speak up in this way after all if you have accepted your

feelings needs and values along with everyone else's and why shouldn't you

then it makes sense to speak them doesn't it it's just natural

so please take responsibility for your feelings needs and values and speak them

again and again instead of distorting them into a judgment of what's wrong with the other

person if you take responsibility for your

feelings needs and values and speak them without Judgment of the other in your heart

I promise you every single relationship with every single person in your life

will either fall into harmony or dissolve

until you're left with nothing but harmonious relationships

this is an ongoing process and requires real inner work

but is there anything more worth doing if you want a world of Harmony

it starts with you

I hope this video was thought provoking for you and I hope you share it with friends

take care