

Jung & the Invasion of the Collective Mind

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Source



The question we are confronted with is a collective one, and it concerns us all. Why are so many of us, our fellow humans, behaving so badly? And not only badly, but in a way that is detrimental to our own well-being. It would seem more than

strange, verging on the insane, that any creature would wish to deliberately harm its own environment and support systems. Yet for us humans we have the significant added factor of being conscious of our actions, and self-conscious in our reflective understanding. So, again, to ask – *what has gotten into our minds?*

It appears that this question has been asked many times in the past, over and over, by many thinkers, philosophers, sages, and mystics. It is a question that has concerned a great number of people for a long time. And yet I can only suspect that the issue is of great concern today because for the first time in our human history we are behaving as a global species. With our communication technologies we are sharing our ideas, stories, opinions, and the rest, all across the planet. We can know almost instantly some news from a far-flung corner of the world. And so, at this time in our human history, a negative presence in our collective mindset would be disastrous.

It is my suggestion that a mental contagion has entered the collective human mindset; that is, into our collective consciousness. Briefly, I shall discuss this in regard to the work of psychologist C.G. Jung.

Jung's Collective Unconscious

Jung was perhaps the first psychologist to fully realize that what we see playing out upon the global stage is largely a projection, or symptom, of the unconscious psyche of humanity. Jung coined the term 'collective unconscious' in his 1916 essay 'The Structure of the Unconscious' and went on to articulate his ideas further in later publications. In his essay 'The Significance of Constitution and Heredity in Psychology' (November 1929) he wrote that 'primordial images' – or 'archetypes' as he came to call them – belonged to an underlying unconscious psyche and were not individually

acquired. He stated that the 'psychic stratum,' which he called the collective unconscious, was deeply influenced by 'inherited presuppositions.' In this essay Jung wrote that

'the collective unconscious comprises in itself the psychic life of our ancestors right back to the earliest beginnings. It is the matrix of all conscious psychic occurrences, and hence it exerts an influence that compromises the freedom of consciousness in the highest degree, since it is continually striving to lead all conscious processes back into the old paths.'¹

Importantly, Jung considered that this collective unconscious does not develop individually but is inherited. That is, we inherit a 'psychic life' that is filled with 'occurrences' that stretch back to earliest beginnings. What if a corruption or trauma, such as a *wounded mind* (as I refer to it), has already invaded this psychic stratum and now manifests as a disturbance in the field of humanity's collective unconscious? We could very well be dealing with a psycho-pathogen – that is, a mind virus – that infects our individual minds from the underlying collective realm.

This is not the realm of fantasy but of very real possibility. If we take the modern analogy of computing, then it is similar to how a virus would enter our computers and install a malware or change the coding. Such a mental pathogen would act in the same way by installing its own malware program in our minds. For most of the time we are unaware of it, as it acts alongside our own 'normal' mind until a time when it takes over almost completely. Over time our own mental make-up – our psychological state – would adapt the foreign 'invader' and assimilate it into its own functioning as a way of normalization. In other words, we would eventually come to consider it as *our* mind.

Modern science now confirms that the 'physical' universe is not materially substantial in the way we thought, or

previously were told. It is a dimension of energy that coalesces, or coagulates, into dense arrangements that we experience as matter. Our space-time continuum is not empty but consists of highly dense energy that forms a non-local field. Modern scientific philosophers also hypothesize that this non-local field is conscious.[\[1\]](#) Everything in our physical universe is a projection, or secondary manifestation, from this underlying non-local field. Similarly, human consciousness exists as a non-local phenomenon, operating both within the human mind-body complex as well as without. This perspective helps us to understand how a mental virus could infect and affect human life regardless of location and physical proximity. Psychic energy operates within the non-local field and as a species we are connected in what we could term a 'species mind' that manifests across the planet like a mental membrane. The reality in which we live is suffused with our mental projections. As Jung taught, our unconscious thoughts form a part of the world just as do our conscious thinking.

Since the psychosis functions as a field phenomenon, it underlies the entire collective field of non-local consciousness. The danger here is that each person can potentially be infected by the 'wounded mind' simply by not being mindful of their thoughts. Before we know it, we are having malicious or angry *psychosis*-like thoughts, which then could easily manifest into actual behavior. Who at one time or another hasn't had a mean or nasty thought? The question is – did this thought originate within us, or did it enter from without? Since the mental pathogen is a non-local phenomenon then it is possible that we all are infected with it to varying degrees. Or, it may be more accurate to say that this mind *has us*. And the worst of it is that most people will be unconscious and unwitting carriers of this pathogen. As Jung said,

'Wars, dynasties, social upheavals, conquests, and religions

are but the superficial symptoms of a secret psychic attitude unknown even to the individual himself, and transmitted by no historian...and the whole future, the whole history of the world, ultimately spring as a gigantic summation from these hidden sources in individuals.'²

Later in his life Jung was even more direct and forthcoming about the dangers lurking within the human psyche. He stated that 'Indeed, it is becoming even more obvious that it is not famine, not earthquakes, not cancer but man himself who is man's greatest danger to man, for the simple reason that there is no adequate protection against psychic epidemics, which are infinitely more devastating than the worst of natural catastrophes.'³ Jung was clear that psychic epidemics were a reality and put forth that humanity is in great danger exactly because the human psyche is in great danger. Similarly, physicist and thinker David Bohm, who was also aware of this mental infection, considered in his later life how we might combat this problem:

'It's similar to a virus – somehow this is a disease of thought, of knowledge, of information, spreading all over the world. The more computers, radio, and television we have, the faster it spreads. So the kind of thought that's going on all around us begins to take over in every one of us, without our even noticing it. It's spreading like a virus and each one of us is nourishing that virus...The only way to stop it is to recognize it, to acknowledge it, to see what it is. If any one of us starts to look at that, then we are looking at the source of the problem.'⁴

The only true alternative to the 'wounded mind' lies first in our recognition and acceptance of its presence. This mental pathogen, whether it is called the wounded mind or a psychosis-virus, is really a turning away and denial of the human spirit. To overcome its influence, we need to turn inward to find strength and support.

The Wounded Healer

It would be a false gesture to adjust ourselves to an incumbent corrupted system as we would eventually become corrupted ourselves. Yet we would likely not notice this as the insanity of the wounded mind would have become the 'norm.' We are reminded of the popular quote from Krishnamurti – *'It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society.'*

We can recognize the presence of the wounded mind when it enters into our thinking as it seeks to strengthen the rational 'logical' component and attempts to over-intellectualize everything. This 'false psyche' that implants itself into us brings along its own convoluted logic. This topsy-turvy nonsensical thinking is an inversion of true values. It is responsible for developing what I call the 'old mind' thinking patterns; namely the values of conquest, competition, censorship, and control. Such terror as it can produce doesn't need to come from guns or bombs (although this is one unfortunate form); it seeks coercion, compliance, and ultimately control, by manipulation and malicious influence. Such control can come from unknowing schoolteachers, bullying authority figures, as well as greedy financiers; all of whom place us under influence, force us into passivity, or emasculate us through debt. And such enforcers may wear the smartest or the most expensive of clothes and come with a smile upon their faces. Each of us can be both a recipient of the wounded mind as well as a potential healer for ourselves and others.

The archetype of the 'wounded healer,' coined by Jung, refers to those people (generally psychologists, therapists, etc) who feel compelled to treat others because of having been 'wounded,' or experienced some form of trauma, themselves. A personal experience of trauma may serve as a catalytic process

that can later help to facilitate healing within others. Since as a species we share a collective psyche (Jung's collective unconscious), then we also share in the collective wound of humanity.

Our very real struggles today are not just the distractions that are pushed onto us through our mainstream medias – the political farce, national rivalries, shallow ideologies, opinions, and fear-mongering – but more so between the inner freedom of the human spirit and the constraints of our mentally-corrupted societies and cultures. We need to ask ourselves the question that don Juan posed to his student Carlos Castaneda – 'Then ask yourself, and yourself alone, one question...Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good, if it doesn't it is of no use.' The most important things in the world are not to be found in any place external to us. Any society or culture that does not recognize and support the human as a spiritual being will ultimately be lacking in a viable, long-term future.

In this brief essay I have brought forth a hypothesis that I term the *Wounded Mind*. The source of this trauma is still unclear and up for debate. It may be a collective psychosis of civilization, a devolutionary impulse/presence, or a combination of these. Or else it may be something other but with similar aspects. Yet whatever may be the root cause, it is still quite clear that a traumatic presence lingers within the collective psyche of humanity, and it needs to be recognized for what it is – and expelled. Perhaps the traumas we are seeing inflicted upon the world today are part of this expulsion – a sort of public exorcism. In this case, we can all act as our own 'wounded healers' in order to evolve toward our destiny as a noble human species upon this planet.

Extracted from the book [Healing the Wounded Mind: The Psychosis of the Modern World and the Search for the Self](#)

Kingsley L. Dennis is the author of [Healing the Wounded Mind: The Psychosis of the Modern World and the Search for the Self](#) and [Bardo Times: hyperreality, high-velocity, simulation, automation, mutation – a hoax?](#) available online. Visit him on the web at <https://www.kingsleydennis.com/>