

The Psychology of Hate

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About the Author

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The Psychology of Hate

This entry from the Encyclopedia of Human Behavior defines hate as a state of arousal or excitation in humans in which anger, negative judgments and impulses of destruction predominate. This state is produced by a combination of biological and environmental factors. There are various pathological states of hate, and manifestations of hate are numerous, ranging from subtle indirect expressions to outright violence and war. However, not all hate is bad; some hate is destructive while other hate can be constructive.

The Biological Roots of Hate

Hate itself is not innate; however, the emotion of anger and the impulse toward aggression are part of the human constitution. And since hate is generally associated with anger and aggression, we can therefore say that it is indirectly innate.

An innate aggressive drive has been observed throughout the animal kingdom. Countless investigations have proven that fighting behavior in animals is genetically programmed and they have uncovered innate, species-specific patterns of fighting. For example, cichlids (a species of fish), even when they have been isolated from parents at birth, begin to fight with rivals by beating them with their tails and pushing or pulling them with their mouths; marine iguanas reared in isolation fight by butting their heads together; lava lizards lash one another with their tails; fighting cocks kick at one another with

their claws; and roe buck attack with their antlers. All of this fighting happens spontaneously at a certain point in development.

An innate aggressive drive has also been observed in human beings and has primarily been linked to the “struggle for survival” (Charles Darwin’s term) or to a territorial instinct. Aggression in human history is associated with the hunting and gathering of primitive men, with the territorial separation of—and strife between—individuals, groups and nations, and to the formation of social hierarchies or ranking orders. One can also see manifestations of this drive in the rough play of young boys and in the athletic competition of adults. Indeed, all humans show the unmistakable tendency to keep their distance from strangers due to a fear of their aggression.

Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1974), an ethologist, has noted that the disposition for aggression can be found in all human societies throughout the world. Threat displays by means of ornament, weaponry, feathers, masks, skins, boots, and phallic exposure as well as facial expressions of threat and rage are universal. People from around the world stomp their feet and clench their fists when they are angry. Also widespread throughout the world is the glorification of aggression through heroic sagas, coats of arms, and medals. Indeed, the history of humankind is the history of conflict and war.

Biologically, aggression is associated with a “fight or flight” response that

arouses the sympathetic nervous system and the endocrine system. This is a coordinated operation that goes into effect when an individual feels stress. The stressor excites the hypothalamus (firing brain cells) to produce a substance that stimulates the pituitary and adrenal glands to discharge corticoids (such as adrenalin) into the blood. This in turn elicits thymus shrinkage and releases sugar; and at the same time it also arouses the sympathetic nervous system, which contracts muscles and blood vessels. If an individual is in a state of arousal over a period of time, that can further affect the body's operation and chemistry. In addition, sudden increases of sexual hormones such as testosterone and estrogen can also arouse aggression.

Experimental psychologists have demonstrated a rage reaction by attaching electrodes to the hypothalamus. Subjects have been induced to states of extreme anger and have been impelled to perform acts of violence. Such experiments have also shown that while subjects are in such a state of induced rage, their cognitive abilities change; anger leads to negative judgments (hate) and the desire to eliminate the source of the anger (the stressor) by destroying it. The drive-reduction theory in psychology—stating that human motivation stems from the need to reduce imbalances in homeostasis—describes this phenomenon.

There is some variation in the amount of innate aggression in each individual at birth. Thomas and Chess (1968) discovered that some babies are

easy to care for, some are cranky and difficult to care for, and some are slow to warm up. Their research proved that humans are not blank slates when born but come already equipped with temperamental differences. It is not clear, however, whether this variation in infant aggressiveness is due to genetics or to environmental conditions during pregnancy. Research has shown, for example, that mothers who are depressed (a state of anger and hate turned inwards) during pregnancy give birth to hyperactive infants. On the other hand, not all cranky babies have depressed mothers.

The neural correlates of hate have been investigated with an MRI procedure (Zeki and Romaya, 2008). In this experiment, people had their brains scanned while viewing pictures of people they hated. The results showed increased activity in the medial frontal gyrus, right putamen, bilaterally in the premotor cortex, in the frontal pole, and bilaterally in the medial insula of the human brain. Zeki and Romaya concluded that there is a distinct pattern of brain activity that occurs when people are experiencing hatred. The link between brain activity and hate does not in and of itself implicate a genetic cause (brain activity can also be affected by the environment), but it does point to biology.

Hate, then, is the cognitive component of the “fight or flight” arousal state and as all other genetic aspects of emotion. This state of aggressive arousal differs from other states of excitement such as anxiety or nervous anticipation,

although these too involve the sympathetic nervous system. The biological roots of aggression eventually stimulate negative thought patterns in the brain. We hate that which frightens, frustrates, or unsettles us. This hate (and the state of arousal that underlies it) can be temporary or long term, and it can be conscious or unconscious. In some cases people can be in a state of chronic tension and not know it, and they can feel hate and not be aware of it.

The Environmental Roots of Hate

While there is undoubtedly an innate aggressive drive in humans, that drive cannot become aroused in and of itself. Aggression and hate depend on an interplay of innate and environmental factors. The mixture of latent (biological) and environmental factors may differ from individual to individual.

There are numerous theories about what kinds of environmental factors lead to aggression and hate. One theory focuses on the stressful changes in the environment that require adjustment: getting a divorce, getting fired, getting married, having a child, losing a loved one—these all bring about stress and are sometimes accompanied by aggression and hate. Another theory centers on frustration, holding that aggression and hate are linked to frustration of some kind (unrequited love, envy, unfulfilled ambitions, etc.). Another posits that aggression and hate are connected with threats to survival, as when a rival threatens to take one's job or the government takes away one's food stamps.

Another theory holds that hate may be transmitted through various psychological means such as identification (as when a child identifies with a parent) or indoctrination (as when an individual or group is “brain-washed” into adapting a negative attitude toward another individual or group).

Studies of infants show a relationship between bonding and aggression. There is a period of life in which bonding with a loving caretaker is essential for survival. In one study, 91 infants in a foundling home during a war were separated from their mothers after the age of 3 months and fed by a succession of busy nurses. Thirty-four of the infants died by the second year, and a pattern was observed. Upon first being separated from their mothers, infants would typically cry and cling angrily to whatever nurse was feeding them (aggression turned outward); then they would go through a phase of anaclitic depression, lying sullenly in their cribs (aggression turned inward); then motor retardation would set in; and finally they would develop marasmus (somatizing their aggression into problems with eating). These studies show that bonding is critical during this early phase of development, and that aggression and destruction erupt as a defense against the loss of this bonding (Spitz, 1965).

Hence, the seeds of the environmental contribution to the formation of aggression and hate are laid in earliest childhood and are transmitted in the milieu of the family. Our first experience of love stems from this earliest bonding with our maternal caretaker, a bonding that, when successful, evokes

feelings of gratitude, security, fulfillment, and contentment (Klein, 1957). Our first experience of hate also stems from this period. If this first relationship is deficient, we feel cut off, frustrated, threatened, and enraged. We want to destroy this deficient caretaker (bite the breast that feeds us) or, if that is not possible, to destroy ourselves. In other words, when our survival is threatened, the biological “fight or flight” response kicks in, our system is aroused, and we become enraged and hateful. This first relationship is not only the prototype and precursor of what is to come, it may also create fixations or “faults” that establish a tendency toward hating. Like underground faults that lead to future earthquakes, human development fixations may lead to future emotional disturbances, aggression, and hate.

As we develop other environmental factors also help to shape our capacities for loving and hating. Other figures—the father, siblings, grandparents, aunts, and uncles—begin to exert an influence in how we love and hate. We form identificational bonds with those we admire and those we fear and tend to incorporate their ways of loving and hating. If our parenting is punitive or abusive (and thereby hateful), we may grow up to be punitive and abusive to others (or to submit to abuse and/or abuse ourselves). If the parenting is permissive (a disguised form of hate under which a parent unconsciously withholds proper guidance), we may grow up to be self-indulgent and bratty (hatefully inconsiderate and demanding), but permissive to our own children and those who ally with us. If our family values are religious and

distrustful of those who are not religious, we may grow up to adopt these values. We may feel that anybody who is not of our faith represents a threat to our security and hence is to be hated (i.e., to be pitied and rescued). If our family values are ideological and distrustful of anybody who does not share our ideology, we may grow up to adopt this ideology. We may then feel that anybody who is not of our ideological or political persuasion represents a threat to our security and hence is to be hated (i.e., ridiculed and dismissed).

Envy and jealousy are often closely related to hate. When we feel envious or jealous, our “fight or flight” response is also aroused and we feel resentment (a form of hate) toward those we envy and experience their existence as an insult and threat to our own. However, the extent to which envy and jealousy prevail in each individual’s psychodynamics depends upon upbringing. A tendency toward feeling envy or jealousy may result from childhood spoiling and pampering, from an identification with a parent who has this tendency, or from early childhood fixations that result in inferiority or castration complexes. The latter cause individuals to feel that they, their bodies, their sexual organs, and their lots in life, are inferior, disadvantaged, or threatened.

Later, in adulthood, both personal and larger social and cultural factors can influence our hatred. If we already have fixations from early childhood, any situations in our adult lives that repeat the events of those fixations will upset us, arouse us, and induce a hate reaction. If we have lost our mother at two

years of age, any loss later on may bring about a breakdown into depression (self-hate). If we have felt severely deprived, any deprivation will be severely upsetting; if we have felt extremely indulged and pampered, any failure of our later environment to duplicate this indulgence and pampering will arouse rage, etc.

In addition, those who have had deficient bonding (or socialization) in early childhood and who have developed fixations or tendencies toward negative thinking and hating will be the most influenced by aversive social or cultural factors. They will be the first to join movements that give them a justification for hating some designated enemy. They will be the first to rail against another nation that has temporarily been designated as a country's enemy. They will be the first to discriminate against others or other groups (while accusing the other group of discriminating against them). They will be the first to join any angry mob.

Psychological tests show that how we perceive things is greatly influenced by our personality. For example, the Rorschach Inkblot Test may be given to several individuals and each will see different things in the ink blots. In a section from one of these blots, some individuals may see two angels with wings, while others may see two boys urinating, and still others may see two scuba divers roasting fish over a fire. What we see in these blots depends on our personality make-up (i.e., whether we are obsessive-compulsive, histrionic,

paranoid, psychotic, or the like). In other words, our early childhood conditioning influences how we perceive the world; we may perceive some event as being threatening (and respond with anger and hatred), while another person may perceive the same event differently. Threats and hate are often in the eye of the beholder.

Numerous social and cultural factors may arouse aggression and hate. Times of war and economic depression are two of the most dramatic examples of this. During such times, wide-scale anger, fear, depression, and sometimes hysteria run high, and each individual in a society feels affected by such emotions and these can lead to attitudes of blame and hate for that which is designated as the cause of this misfortune (the enemy country, the government, Republicans, etc.). Social or cultural changes may also arouse aggression and hatred. For example, an anthropologist studied how an abrupt change in the system and values of a primitive village resulted in an increase in community stress and aggression. Before the change, the community as a whole cultivated and distributed food more or less in a communistic fashion. When it was decreed that all individuals would henceforth be responsible for their own subsistence, there was an aggressive scramble to acquire the uncultivated wet valleys and a subsequent increase in animosity and criminality. People became hostile to one another, feared one another, envied one another, and became ruthless in dealing with one another. Something like this occurred in Russia when the Communist government toppled in 1991.

Poverty and overcrowding can also arouse aggression and hate, as can a lack of meaningful job opportunities. The range of social factors is myriad.

Authority figures can arouse and shape hatred. Stanley Milgram's famous experiment at Yale University (Milgram, 1974) provided a scientific understanding of this phenomenon. In his study he told his subjects—men and women from all walks of life—that they were participating in an experiment to test the effects of punishment on learning. Each subject was asked to take the role of teacher and to deliver electric shocks to a “student” who was actually a paid actor. The student was strapped into a chair in a separate room and received apparent electric shocks. The teacher was instructed to ask the student questions, and was told by the experimenter to administer various doses of electricity by using knobs on a fake electric generator. The knobs were labeled from 15 to 450 volts. The teachers were instructed to give increasingly stronger shocks, and the students would pretend to receive the shocks and cry out and moan in agony and beg the teachers to stop. If a teacher seemed doubtful about administering the shocks, the experimenter, standing beside the teacher, would say in a firm, authoritative voice, “You must go on.” The experimenter would reassure the teacher that no harm was being done. Although some subjects showed signs of great conflict, 65% of them continued to deliver what they thought were 450 volts of electricity to a screaming human being. Underneath label of “450 volts” was a disclaimer: “Warning: Severe shock.”

This experiment showed that to some degree or another people are willing to administer electric shock (act out hate) if an authority figure gives permission to do so. There are several explanations for this. Throughout the history of humankind we have shown a need to believe in something greater than ourselves and to obey it—whether it is a king or a president or a Pope; whether it is a God or many gods or a sacred book underneath some religion or mythology; or whether it is an idea or philosophy or political movement. This higher authority absolves us of responsibility. We particularly look for ways in which we can act out hate without feeling responsible or guilty about it. Hence, to the degree that we have not fully separated from our parents and fully matured, we will need such surrogate authorities to believe in and take responsibility for our decisions. In addition, to the extent we have developed fixations and faults, we will have pent-up rage and potential hatred, and we will look for an excuse (an authority figure's permission) to vent it.

The state of hating, then, is the culmination of a complex process involving the interplay of the innate human aggressive drive, early childhood conditioning, and later personal and societal environmental forces. Sometimes hatred erupts for a short time and is a temporary response to a specific event; while in other cases hatred is chronic and becomes an ingrained trait resulting from deeply traumatic or ongoing aversive events.

Manifestations of Hate

Manifestations of hate range from the obvious and simple to the subtle and complex. Obvious and simple forms include direct verbal expressions such as, “I hate you!” or “You stupid idiot!” as well as acts of violence such as murder, rape, or war. More subtle and complex manifestations comprise a multitude of manipulations, ploys, stings, attitudes, and acts through which hate is indirectly or covertly expressed. These include, to name just a few examples, forgetting an appointment, pretending to like people whom one hates and thereby “killing them with kindness,” having an affair with a married man or woman, stealing memo pads or paperclips from the company for which one works, or telling a child to “stop crying or I’ll give you something to really cry about.”

Generally, one can say that those people who have attained emotional health, established genuine bonds with others, and feel connected to their vocation, will manifest the least hate. People will manifest more hate if they have not matured emotionally, have not established genuine bonds with others, and do not feel connected to a vocation. The latter will feel less secure and hence their aggressive response and hatred will be more easily aroused, either toward others or toward themselves. They will act out in various ways in order to try to compensate for their feelings of insecurity, alienation, and rage—such acting out being the result of their hate. The more aggression they bring into the world, the more disturbed will be their relation to the world.

Hate can be manifested in different types of psychopathology, either indirectly or directly. A passive-aggressive personality acts out anger in very indirect ways. Instead of telling you he hates you, he will forget your dinner appointment and then apologize profusely. An obsessive-compulsive personality expresses hate by over-controlling people and refusing real intimacy. A masochistic personality will provoke others into being hateful so that he/she can feel (hatefully) victimized and superior. A paranoid personality denies his own anger and projects that others are out to get him. (In doing so he unwittingly causes others, through projective identification, to want to get him.) A histrionic personality expresses hate through sexual teasing and fits. A depressive personality hates the world and also hates himself. His hate may be somatized as insomnia, or various pains and aches. A schizophrenic personality expresses hate through various grandiose delusions (through which he triumphs over enemies).

As noted above, hate can be expressed in three basic ways: it can be expressed in a direct, verbal way, it can be acted out, and it can be somatized. Direct verbal expressions of hate include any verbal statement of hate including curses, insults, threats, death wishes, and the like. The acting out of hate includes any action that is rude, hostile, rejecting, excluding, manipulative, deceitful, defiant, shaming, ridiculing, contemptuous, threatening, violent, and the like. Somatizing hate has to do with the “bottling up” of aggression so that it takes a toll on one’s own body, as when one develops heart disease due to a

stressful, hate-inducing life experience. Somatizing also includes using illness to manipulate others, as when an individual develops a hysterical paralysis out of resentment at not being cared for—such paralysis forcing others to care for the individual.

According to Freud, most of our hateful, aggressive impulses remain unconscious. What we are conscious of is the most surface reason for our hate. Thus we may tell a friend we hate a certain person because he is always trying to get attention. What we remain unconscious of is that, on the deepest level, we hate that person because we are jealous of him for getting attention that we wish we could get. We may not wish to acknowledge that we hate our brother, for there is a strong social taboo against such hatred; so instead we may show great kindness to this brother and even convince ourselves that we love him, but at the same time we may constantly forget his birthday, neglect to write to him, flirt with his wife, and in other ways act out unconscious hate. We chop down tropical forests and drive gasoline-fueled automobiles to advance our immediate goals while at the same time passively killing our planet and remaining collectively unconscious of our own mass death wish.

The most destructive manifestations of hate occur in families. “Power does not corrupt men,” Bernard Shaw said; “fools, however, if they get into positions of power, corrupt power.” To be a parent is to be in a position of absolute power over another human being, and unfortunately, many parents

harbor unconscious aggression and hate that gets taken out on their children. Indeed, no occupation or even government gives its leader as much power as a parent has over a child, and that power is held practically sacred and shielded from the public eye. In a sense, each of us, as children are slaves to our parents. Some slave owners are loving, some are not.

The root cause of much environmental hate is the dysfunctional family, with its hotbed of unresolved unconscious anger. Parental expressions of hate can begin even before birth. Much recent research has focused on how traumas to the unborn fetus can affect later personality development. Mothers can express passive hate during pregnancy if they smoke, drink or take drugs, if they are careless with their diet, or if they behave recklessly. Fathers can express hate by abusing the mother during pregnancy causing stress, which in turn affects the growing fetus. Once the child is born parents can express hate in the obvious ways such as beatings, sexual molestation, scapegoating, degradation, or neglect, or more subtle kinds of emotional abuse, such as when a parent constantly compares one child unfavorably with his older brother or with his friends and makes him feel inferior. Rene Spitz, observing 203 mother and infant dyads in an institution, wrote of the indirect and unconscious ways caretakers can express hate during the first year of life. For example, he described caretakers who related to their infants with “primary anxious over-permissiveness” and others who acted out “hostility in the guise of anxiety.” In each of these cases, the caretakers were compensating for unconscious

feelings of resentment toward the child (usually an unwanted child) through an exaggerated anxiety and over-concern with the child's welfare. He noted a high degree of eczema in the infants of such caretakers. It is a general principle in psychoanalysis that an obsessive over-concern with somebody's welfare masks an unconscious wish for their harm.

The family can be a cycle of hate and, generation after generation, a breeding ground of psychopathological hate. A caretaker can suffer from depression, particularly postpartum depression, resulting in her complete rejection of her infant during the weeks right after birth. Research has shown that maternal deprivation during the earliest stage of infancy can lead to severe disturbances, creating fixations that program an individual to later have a tendency to withdraw from contact with others and develop various psychopathologic traits such as depression, sociopathic personality, or schizophrenia.

An obsessive-compulsive caretaker may be obsessed with neatness and order to an extent that he or she will not allow any of the children to ever enjoy their existence and may, in turn, engender an obsessive-compulsive personality in the children. A caretaker may be a self-defeating martyr type, continually bemoaning his or her life, so that the children get not real love or attention but feel somehow responsible for victimizing the caretaker. This can affect their self-esteem and functioning later on, and they may later replicate

this behavior with their own children. One parent may be abusive to the children while another may be passive-aggressive, silently or weakly allowing the abuse to go on. Children of abusive parents often grow up to abuse their own children.

On a broader spectrum, cultural forms of hate, such as racism and sexism or religious discrimination, have existed throughout history. History books are full of stories of mass discrimination, crusades, and exterminations of one group by another group. For example, in Nazi Germany 6 million Jews were rounded up, tortured, and exterminated in death camps. The Nazis decided that the Jews were evil exploiters of Germany, poisoning the purity of the German people, and therefore had to be eradicated. This gross expression of prejudice and cruelty by one people against another may be explained by focusing on the cultural milieu of Europe at the time. After Germany lost World War I, it was forced to sign a “humiliating” treaty with other European countries. Thereafter Germany became the scapegoat and laughing-stock of Europe. Germans were left thoroughly demoralized and sank into a psychological and economic depression. In the midst of a depression, people look for someone on whom to take out their anger. Along came Hitler, an authority figure who gave them permission to blame it on the Jews. Milgram’s study, mentioned previously, was spurred by the Nazi phenomenon.

During the course of history, some prejudices were approved while

certain others were condemned. Hence, the Nazis approved prejudice against Jews, Christians at one point in history sanctified prejudice against people who held different religious beliefs, conducting inquisitions and witch hunts against heathens. In China, during the 1970s, the notorious “Gang of Four” formed the Red Guards and sent them out to rid the country of people who were politically and culturally incorrect; they roamed the countryside imprisoning and killing innocent people, burning houses, destroying monuments, and generally terrorizing everyone. In America, during the McCarthy hearings of the late 1940s, there was a mass persecution of communists (or anybody who looked as if he or she might have communist leanings). Later, McCarthy and his followers were condemned. Social movements often start out with idealistic goals of reforming some social problem, and they just as often end up as hotbeds of hatred that lead to mass hysteria.

Mass hysteria is a gradual or sudden eruption of collective pent-up aggression and hate. If, say, many individuals have innate aggression which has unconscious sources, such individuals may later collectively be pushed into mass hysteria by current events. When a movement comes along that provides them with an opportunity to vent that pent-up hate toward an approved target group, they will be quickly and eagerly do so. The movement (Milgram’s authority) gives them permission to do whatever they will. This collective hate may eventually get out of hand, as it did in Nazi Germany, the Crusades, and the Chinese Cultural Revolution.

Prejudice is a knife that cuts both ways. There are instances of real prejudice (unfounded hatred of an individual or group) and there are other instances in which charges of prejudice are a manipulation the aim of which is to discredit an opponent, to avoid taking responsibility for one's own hate, and to gain special privilege (due to being a victim of prejudice). A cause, religion, or movement becomes an extension of one's identity, mirroring one's ideal self, while that part of the self one wishes to disown—that is, the aggressive or hateful self—is projected onto the “out” group. We and our group are “in,” good, righteous, and without ulterior motives. The “out” group is bad, morally repugnant, and imbued with evil motives. The more disturbed individuals are, the more they are prone to splitting others into stereotypes of good and bad, rather than seeing people as complex human beings. In our times, many liberals demonize conservatives this way, and many conservatives devalue liberals this way. Wilfred Gaylin (2004) notes that “Whereas the hater must demonize the object of its hatred, the prejudiced individual is more likely to dehumanize the object.”

Acts of interpersonal violence as well as mass violence in wars are the most extreme manifestations of hate. When people are aroused to an extent that they kill each other, it is always due to fears that their own lives are in jeopardy. Jealous lovers kill because they feel that they themselves have been psychologically murdered by their lover's real or imagined infidelity. Wars are in part innate battles over territoriality (part of the human genetic endowment) and

in part due to aversive environmental conditions. Narcissism (in the form of patriotism) often plays a role. German pride was hurt by the loss of World War I and by their economic depression. To “save face” Germany started World War II. Japan, wishing to expand its territory and enhance its narcissistic megalomania, joined in. Other nations felt threatened by them and like dominoes, one by one, were drawn into the war as each of their aggressive drive was stoked.

Constructive and Destructive Hate

Not all hate is destructive. In general, the more mature an individual or country is, the more it can be aware of its hateful feelings and express them in a constructive way—that is, in a way that resolves conflict rather than feeding it. Hence, most direct verbal expressions of hate are constructive, while most acting out or somatizing of hate is destructive. There is a popular misconception that “love cures all.” If by love one means, “Let’s all be nice to each other and suppress our aggression and hate,” then such sentiments, no matter how lofty, are misleading. They fail to appreciate fully the nature of aggression and hate; it cannot be willed away through calls for unity. The antidote to destructive hate is constructive hate, not guilty pseudo-love.

Donald Winnicott (1949), a British psychoanalyst, tells a story that illustrates this point. He once had an orphan boy live with him and his wife. This

boy, who was about 9, was quite unsocialized and would have binges in which he would menace Winnicott and his wife and destroy their furniture. Winnicott noted that each of these incidents would arouse intense feelings of hate. The boy, he interpreted, had a need to induce others into hating him in order to feel worthwhile. To help the boy develop, Winnicott believed he had to let him know that he did indeed hate him. "If the patient seeks objective or justified hate, he must be able to reach it, else he cannot feel he can reach objective love," he writes. Therefore, each time the boy went on a binge of aggression, Winnicott would take him outside and set him down on the front porch, rain or sleet or snow. There was a special bell the boy could ring and he knew that if he rang it he would be readmitted into the house and nothing would be said about his fit. Each time Winnicott put him outside, he told the boy, "I hate you for what you just did." It was easy for Winnicott to say that, because it was true. Moreover, he believed it was not only necessary for the boy's development, but also necessary for himself. For had he not constructively expressed his hate, he could not have continued to live with the boy "without losing my temper and without every now and again murdering him."

In other words, constructive expressions of hate involve mature ego control of the aggressive drive and hate; they consist of expression it in such a way as to counter destructive expressions of hate. Couples who use constructive hate can resolve their arguments, while couples who fight in destructive way end up having the same arguments over and over. Nations

who counter the destructive hate of other nations with constructive hate will be more likely to resolve disputes, while nations who counter destructive hate with more destructive hate will end up in war. Constructive hate is usually conscious, while destructive hate has unconscious roots. If we act out hate in an unconscious way, there is little change of resolution. If we insult somebody and when they respond with anger we retort, "I didn't do anything, you're over-reacting," or "Well, you started it," we are denying own aggression, hence preventing resolution. Similarly, all refusals to engage in constructive dialogue represent destructive hate.

Freud thought that civilization itself was a cause of discontent and therefore a breeding ground of aggression and hate. Manifestations of destructive hate do seem to be spiraling as civilization becomes more crowded and technological (and thereby alienating). We now have the power to push buttons and kill millions without actually experiencing what we are doing (another illustration of Milgram's experiments). Technology has made our lives easier and spoiled us to a point where we have become addicted to ease and cannot do without it, even though it is destroying our planet and ourselves. Like caged animals, we have become imprisoned by our own civilizations, and have developed more and more disturbances and illnesses.

The solution to interpersonal, as well as world, problems lies in a deeper understanding of hate, and in particular, in a deeper understanding of the

differences between constructive and destructive hate. At the deepest level, every expression of hate is a defense against a real or imagined threat, a compensation for feelings of inferiority or powerlessness, and a plea for attention. Understanding how destructive hate comes about and what it really means is to react to it in an appropriate way, not with a guilt-ridden sentimental cry for unity, nor with a punitive cry for revenge, but with an honest expression of one's feelings—that is, through the expression of constructive hate. Love is relating genuinely to another human and to the world. Constructive hate is love.

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