

Demons Of Two Types; Christianity, Buddhism, And Psychiatry

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Demons Of Two Types, And Christianity And Buddhism

Mindfulness and demons (both our own mind's demons and mental being demons).

Our own mind's demons might be attachment, greed, anger, folly, jealousy, grasping, objectified attachment, delusion, etc.

Mental being demons are occasionally part of a dilemma in mental health – and they can be straightforward or difficult to navigate. I came across a good Buddhist resource on this all – the two types of demons – and now I can probe further. I've also contemplated myself how one would deal with them, from the Buddhist-insight standpoint I now have, and continue to deepen.

In addition, I'd like to introduce a thought on mental being or spiritual demons. According to Christian tradition, Jesus was tempted by the devil. He knew how to deal with the devil, spoke to him, and refuted him, and continued his path. According to Buddhist tradition (from what I've seen – one should verify this), the Buddha encountered Mara (demon king) at the time of his enlightenment. Mara's demon armies shot arrows at the Buddha that turned to flowers in mid-air. The Buddha said to Mara, "Mara, you have no power here." and Mara fled. The Buddha continued his path. So, if these are the case, these are realities, and one can ask, "What is it that Jesus was, that he could refute the devil and continue his path? What spiritual truths did He appeal to? And what is it that the Buddha was, that he could refute Mara and his armies and continue his path? What was the Buddha's mind, and mental perception?" An individual encountering a voice – perhaps a voice with embodiment – or a mental being demon, might ask a similar question of himself or herself: "What is it that I am, that I bring to the table, that the voice has power or not? What is it that I might have or learn or attain that I could bring to the table?" Perhaps even, "What is the standpoint of the voice? What is the voice, and what does it represent?"

Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5, NKJV) This might be seen as relevant, for the Christian! "He who abides in me, and I in him...". If Jesus abides in a person, and that person in Jesus, then that spiritual Being-awareness and Being-ability may well be in that person. In James it reads, "But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing." (James 1:4, NKJV)

It is recorded in Matthew 4:1-11 that Jesus was tempted by the devil. Note that Jesus 1) worked with Truth, and 2) did not become caught up in the logic of the devil. He refuted the devil – and this was

Demons Of Two Types, Christianity, Buddhism, And Psychiatry

Page 1 of 5

part of His Being, His Awareness. So likewise, the Christian might be able to have that same Being and Awareness, according to John 15:5; and James is a book about perfecting one's path. I would suggest (not being a Christian, but as an interested Zen Buddhist), that the Christian who encounters a demon of either of the two types (troubling and imperfection type thoughts or a mental being spiritual demon with embodiment) work deeply with truth and the Scriptures, and the present and active Jesus Christ and Spirit – and the truth of God – in his or her everyday life, in his or her own being, to the perfection and “lacking nothing” available. One might contemplate what Jesus says of the Spirit, water, and being born again, in John 3. One might contemplate and activate the fruit of the Spirit (“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” – Galatians 5:22-23, NKJV). One might ask what it means to be sanctified. It may take time.

There are ways to deal with demons of both types from the standpoint of a Buddhist. One can work with truth, appeal to a mantra, or work with self-realization according to the actual, to penetrate the nature and actuality of the demon, or realize the truth of one's own spirituality, this world, putting the demon in that context. One can retain one's strong sense of ethics and present-moment awareness, and practice of the six paramitas (giving, pure observance of precepts, patience, diligence, meditation, prajna or wisdom). Mindfulness may be entirely practical, as one creates a spatial logic and release that is one's own. One can work sometimes to transform the demon into an ally. One might not of course follow the advice of a demon, and one would want to see through its true nature. I'd suggest that Takuan Soho's Ten Qualities can form some reflective material and insight-and-basis: Form, Nature, Embodiment, Power, Function, Latent Cause, External Cause, Latent Effect, Manifest Effect, the Total Insperability of these. Nagarjuna's four reliable facts may be useful, as he stated them: reason, the external world, the present moment, and reality – this world – which seems to be similar to God. One might consider that there are the ten types of beings: Buddha, Bodhisattva, Pratyekyabuddha, Shravaka, Deva, Manushya, Asura, Tiryagyoni, Preta, Naraka.[1]

One Zen man in ancient times was cooking and saw Manjushri appear. The Zen man said, “Get out!” The being said, “But it's me, Manjushri!” The Zen man said, “I don't care if you are Manjushri, I don't want you here!” and beat at the being with his wooden spoon. Manjushri disappeared.

Zen master Seung Sahn, in *Dropping Ashes On The Buddha*, recounts a time when he saw two demon boys, in the forest as I recall.

Once I suggested something that occurred to me, to a “demon” (mental being with embodiment and voice) of a spiritual nature, and that demon ran off in delight – never bothering me again! It's still occasionally present, but it's entirely natural, with mutual respect. There was a significant amount of meaning to its presence over the years, and it had become persistent and annoying at times. (And I had at one point much earlier become “locked up” mentally because I went back and forth between its logic and that of another opposing “demon” to frustration, not really synthesizing my own view. The way out of that would have been to refer to logic, space, writing things down, and sorting things out, retaining the routine expression I did have.) So it's wonderful to see this, the present-moment state.

One advantage of working with truth is that one can establish a framework and perfection data points that one works with – stepping out of the logic of the troublesome thought or demon, noticing a deeper actuality or logic, and realizing the truth of the actual, then a deeper explanation of a dilemma that may

have existed or that persists. One can then better work with that, including to bring deeper insight and greater wisdom to the situation. Sometimes less is more, too: calm, meditation, noticing, seeing the external world in a new way can be places to go, still-and-present-moment points, realization spaces.

Similarly for the Christian: working with truth in a profound way, making mutually illuminating realizations of the truth from various Scriptures, and with prayer, solitude, meditation, the body of believers, Jesus abides in me and I in Jesus.

Footnotes

1. *Eloquent Silence* by Nyogen Senzaki, “The Ten Stages Of Consciousness”, p. 257 ff. Senzaki provides the Buddhist perspective, and the background and meaning to these.

Significant Note – Psychiatry And The Above

Psychiatry sees the above as hallucinations, a disorder, and a permanent biogenetic defect. In psychiatry’s view, it’s a biological process and malfunction that is inherited genetically. Psychiatry has no language for the spiritual, and penalizes certain expressions of it. (It also has no language for the mind, truth, and the world-space.)

Jesus, the Buddha, the Zen man with Manjushri, and Seung Sahn would all be found to have a psychiatric disorder, in today’s society. This would likely be schizophrenia, which is categorized as a serious mental illness. And the individual who is diagnosed with schizophrenia, or against whom a complaint is filed, is in every instance portrayed or implied to be a threat to self or others.

Particularly if one has not perfected one’s own karma, or stepped aside from it, and one expresses oneself in ways that are rendered as a disorder, it may lead to a seemingly intractable situation. Psychiatry offers no spiritual or body-mind-architecture-philosophy/spirituality-world-space[1] recourse.

Note that Jesus, the Buddha, and the Zen man with Manjushri spoke to their spiritual actualities, out loud. This would be noted today in America as indicating a psychiatric mental disorder, and in today’s society to avoid a psych unit, one might be aware of this. One can be committed to a psych unit for such, or for acknowledging such a space. I have tested this. (At times I was quiet-expression, at times dynamic-expressive. At all times I had either routine ethics or a reasoned ethics, that I have taken even deeper.)

Psychiatry is a 250 year-old theory and praxis. Perhaps thought, theory, awareness, the experiential, and praxis from times both ancient and modern – and the spiritual – can illuminate in what would in psychiatry’s stead be realistic, dimension, and adept ways. Rather than penalize vast swaths of individuals and their actual experience, that could be probed for its actual nature, and their experiential acknowledged, in context of some of these and like truths, and historical expression.

Yet again, psychiatry takes a problematic view that seems to be unrealistic. It omits and contradicts the explanatory from the vast array of human experience, including from the ancients – and this seems to me to be relevant to the domain in a striking way. Psychiatry may help some...and it also depends on the psychiatrist (working with the psychosocial may help). But the profession's theory and praxis is dismal. This is heightened and chiseled in the psych unit and followup, and its context.

Psychiatry needs to be replaced by a redefined field. Mvo-p psych. And mvo-p psych includes, indicates, and points to 'all of the above'.

Footnotes

1. See an interview with Marvin Minsky on YouTube where he introduces his idea of not a body-mind duality, but an integrated body-mind-architecture. I further that with my own term here.

Note

Anyone encountering a difficult voice or mental being or spiritual demon should seek a wise path, and obtain relief from what may be a tricky or seemingly intractable situation. Psychiatry may help: it depends, and the above limitations are in place. It's also, in my view, a matter of these other things, and in context of the mvo-p psych thesis, can be dealt with more clearly. Giving time, attention, attention to mental and physical space, wisdom, patience, diligence, reason, and effort matter – and I feel the spiritual space and spiritual truths matter. There is the concrete, and there is the abstract, and seeing things as the fusion of the abstract and the concrete may help see the real world[1], and provide meaningful points of thought-and-the-experiential to work with, an illuminated and empowering view. Working with others may matter. It really depends on one's own path, and what the individual sees as material. There are pleasant mental or spiritual beings, also; and these can even teach. All the best. Probe deeply, look to current patterns and actualities of orientation, and re-orient or deepen your experience in ways you need to.

Footnotes

1. *Fundamental Wisdom Of The Middle Way* by Nagarjuna translated by Nishijima. Nagarjuna says, "When we see the fusion of the abstract and the concrete we see the real world."

Articles

Transforming demons; “Get thee behind me Mara!”: how Buddhism handles demons; from mindfulness meditation to transformation — but no exorcisms

Buddha Weekly

<https://buddhaweekly.com/transforming-demons-get-thee-behind-me-mara-how-buddhism-handles-demons-from-mindfulness-meditation-to-transformation-but-no-exorcisms/>

What Do Psychiatrists Treat if Not the Soul (i.e., the Psyche)?

By Fr. John (Russell Grigaitis)

2020 April 9

Mad In America

<https://www.madinamerica.com/2020/04/what-do-psychiatrists-treat-psyche/>

I’m sorry I don’t have more articles right now from Christianity on the spiritual; I plan to over time. One might also see perspectives from the indigenous cultures, the stories they tell, and the ways they encounter the world. See for instance Mad In America for some in the psychiatric context.

Resources

Mad In America (Science, Psychiatry, And Social Justice)

<https://www.madinamerica.com/>

United States

2003-2020