

Candice Schutter: And we're all moving the needle in the direction of something that is more just and democratic and fair. But we're all doing it a different way. And it's this idea that there's only one true north that keeps us paralyzed, I think. Stop worrying about who you're not, and think about who you are, and what you're good at and lend that to the cause.

Because in some way who you are shatters the group norm, snaps people out of the spell of the hive mind. Say like, yeah, I am going to contribute to this movement that is one where there's a sense of diversity versus conformity.

Hi. Here I am. Back on the main feed.

Why am I back now?

Well, because here in the US, a convicted sexual predator and conman is once again president. And this [00:01:00] time, he's backed by greedy oligarchs and a legit cult following that's more than willing to enable his agenda and bend reality until it breaks.

They're pulling from all the worst cult playbooks endorsed by flying monkeys in Washington who are willing to abandon their ethics and all evidence of morality in an effort to preserve their own proximity to power. And the result is one measure of cruelty after another, economic chaos, racialized abductions, and hey, why not toss in some old school colonial land grabs for good measure.

I mean, I tell you, I thought I had a pretty clear idea of what they had planned, but most days I'm gobsmacked by the news. What they are doing is more heinous, absurd, and devastating than I could have ever imagined.

And it's coming in hot by design. It's what Steve Bannon calls *muzzle velocity*. They are quote unquote, flooding the zone, betting on the [00:02:00] fact that they'll be able to wear us down, overwhelm our senses, and exhaust us into submission.

It's exponentially more intense, but it's all very familiar. Anyone who's ever been in a high control environment knows the drill. Grandstanding and love bombing with false promises. The development of a language that distorts reality and carves divisions. The seizing and maintaining of power by pushing the body and mind to a disorienting and unsustainable breaking point.

The language is slightly different, but it's the same old shtick. MAGA leaders promising their followers a *breakdown to breakthrough* moment. Trust us. We've got you.

They've got you, and me, right where they want us. Confused and disoriented in an upside down world, our ability to reason spiraling the [00:03:00] drain.

Because the war on woke is just what it sounds like. They know that connection, diversity, and wide-eyed awareness is the greatest threat to their high control regime.

So I'm back to continue peeling back the curtain. Oz is full of shit and most of us know it.

Maya Angelou once said, when we know better, we do better.

And I like to think this is true. But unfortunately it isn't always the case.

Trump first upended our lives back in 2016. While this time around is demonstrably much worse, we have, in fact, been here before. We know who we're dealing with.

Candice Schutter: So I keep wondering, are we doing any different now that we know better? And why aren't democratic leaders at the very least, responding to this crisis with greater urgency?

Today I wanna share with you what social [00:04:00] psychology is teaching me about all of the above. Learning about human nature is really making me understand everything we covered in the 'cult'ure series in a completely new way.

Because, truth told, being human is the biggest challenge we face right now. And I don't just mean this in an existential sense in terms of climate change and culture wars. What I'm really interested in is, why is it that so many good and decent people have trouble learning from their mistakes and breaking away from group consensus to take a stand in order to do the right thing?

It is our shared self-sabotaging behaviors that are a real problem right now, especially in social situations where, very often, hive mind sensibilities get in the way of us moving in the direction of what we say we want.

Candice Schutter: During his Nobel Prize acceptance speech in 1986, professor, activist, and Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel spoke to the future that we're now all [00:05:00] living in, to this very moment that we now face:

Midway through his speech, Wiesel said:

"Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men or women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must, at that moment, become the center of the universe."

How do we learn from history's mistakes? In this world of, oh, so many sound bites, how do we make our empathy actionable?

I recorded this content a couple of weeks ago, which is super relevant because a [00:06:00] lot happens in a few days time. But it's okay, because this isn't an exploration of current events. It's an attempt to get at the deeper pulse that keeps us from *doing better* and from *interfering* in ways that could make a real difference in people's lives.

Candice Schutter: Now that we know better, what will it take for us to do better?

We have to do something. We can't give up. Because if we turn our backs and bury our heads in the sand, that's when tyranny wins.

And I don't know about you, but I'm not going down without a fight.

start of episode

Candice Schutter: Today what I wanted to talk about is speaking up when it matters. And, um, really what I want to touch upon is based on social psychology, the things that get in the way of us being able to do that.

And what I've really [00:07:00] found, and hopefully you've found this too through the, throughout the 'cult'ure series and the Deconstructing Dogma Series on Patreon, is that the more we understand what is operating sort of psychoactively within us. And then interspsychically with other people. Like, the more we understand those dynamics, the more we can have self awareness to choose something a little different.

So, today I want to talk about three concepts that come out of social psychology that underscore what we're seeing, not just national political landscapes, but globally, that get in the way of us creating something different. And these are reflexive human responses that have been shown through research to show up across cultures. They might have subtle variations from culture to culture, from nation to nation, from community to community, but they are [00:08:00] consistent in the research.

And most of what I'm going to talk about today, there have been examples of throughout the 'cult'ure series. But again, putting a label on it. Just like when we label emotions, we can respond to them better. When we label these unconscious forces, we can respond to them better.

So the first one is what is known in sociology as groupthink. So groupthink is the spell that's cast when we're in a group of people, and we sort of entrain to a consciousness that's shared. There's a sense of the dissolution of self and we become a part of this group mind, like the hive mind, right?

One of the things that helps me a lot as I learn more about the way these things function. Because when I looked back, when we were sharing stories about my experiences at the Org, and I looked back on, like, Org intensive trainings. And situations where I feel like I didn't speak up when I really wish I had, and what was going [00:09:00] on there? And, and I want to blame myself.

But when I understand brain science, and when I learn, like, what actually happens within us, I can feel a sense of empathy and compassion towards myself and toward the other people in the room. And I think we can respond to things more constructively when we're not beating ourselves up or shaming ourselves for not being, you know, the lone wolf who's crying out

into the night and calling out the harm. To really understand like, oh, oh, that's what's happening there.

So we're all in this sort of hive mind state. And what brain science has shown is that we are wired for this. We are literally wired for this. When we are out of step with the social group that we're in, they've shown through MRI technology that the parts of the brain that light up when we're out of step with the group are the same parts of the brain that light up when we're in physical pain. So it is quite literally painful to [00:10:00] go against the group. Especially if it's a group to which we belong and which our identity is tied.

In addition to the part of the brain where the pain is registering, another part of the brain lights up. Feeling a sense of puzzled and bewildered and confused, that part of the brain lights up as well. So, it's disorienting for us to be out of step with the group.

And so we're basically in a state of distress. And that state of distress causes all kinds of reactions. We're going to talk about one in a little bit that makes us appear as if we're apathetic and we become complacent in situations where we should act. We'll talk about that in a moment. So that's one way it can show up.

It often, in a groupthink scenario, shows up as just simply falling in line with whatever's happening. We just sort of, because the distress of breaking with that group hive mind consciousness is so unsettling, we just kind of reabsorb ourselves into this [00:11:00] headspace that's shared.

So we sidestep tensions in order to avoid having disagreements. Because again, anyone who's involved in that disagreement is having this sort of brain chemistry thing go on.

I really wonder, I haven't looked to see if there's research into this, but it makes me really wonder if in cultures or communities where. Like, I just immediately thought of Aimee Van Ausdall and how she grew up in a family, and you can circle back to her episodes if you missed them, really fascinating conversation with her. And how Aimee was sharing that she grew up in a home where disagreement and debate was just sort of a normal part of discourse. And it wasn't seen as problematic. And it makes me wonder if like her brain developed a little differently, so that when she brings up a dissonant viewpoint or when another dissenting viewpoint comes her way, I wonder if she experiences it the same way. I wonder if we can rewire. I would imagine, because neuroplasticity is a very real thing, [00:12:00] that we can rewire our brains to become more comfortable with disagreement and dissent. But that our evolutionary hardwiring is such that we have these responses and we kind of have to, just like we have to build a muscle to train ourselves to do something Olympian. The Olympian feat of our day is being able to handle difference of opinion without feeling so distressed that we immediately acquiesce to the group or to the leadership that wants us to conform.

So, I don't know, just a little side note there. Something I've been thinking about.

But, so generally speaking, the things that happen with groupthink in conventional brains is that we avoid disagreement.

We also have a tendency to rush to consensus. So what they found in the research is that the best decisions aren't always made in large group settings, because of this tendency to avoid disagreement. There is simplistic solutions to really complex problems because everyone's sort of trying to avoid the tension. And there's a [00:13:00] rush to resolve the potential for tension, and so consensus is come to prematurely. So something else that can happen. And we see this happen a lot, especially in, I'm thinking specifically about politics and legislative branches. And potentially, the court system. I'm sure it happens there as well.

We definitely know that it happens in wellness spaces. And that in general, dissent is discouraged because it creates a ripple in that fabric of peace.

It's one of the things that's really coming forth for me as I'm learning about leadership and especially starting with social psychology of leadership. Is that you know, there's obviously such a thing as bad leaders.

And, a lot of what happens in group dynamics that gets blamed on the leader is a function of group dynamics itself. And that a leader's job is to be consciously aware of the way that groups operate, the way that groupthink and things like [00:14:00] that function, the way that social proof can blind people to alternatives that are better to be explored. The leader's job is to correct for groupthink. And what happens instead is a lot of leaders use groupthink as sort of the wave that they can ride to the ends that they seek. Like, oh, I can just get everyone to comply. But the leader isn't really strong arming that compliance a lot of times. The leader's just using our human nature against us, so to speak.

And I really feel strongly that a leader's job is to know where those group landmines are and to help folks to sidestep them. And to keep the dialogue diverse and engaging.

So based on the research on groupthink, in a way, it creates an altered sense of reality. It's in denial of what is true, in favor of this sort of polished up superficial version of reality [00:15:00] based on consensus.

When I think of examples of this, the first thing that comes to mind is, again, in the legislative domains as we're looking at the responsibility of our elected leaders to stand up in the face of dictatorship and authoritarianism. I think of the State of the Union address that Trump delivered, which I did not watch. I've seen clips of. But I know that representative from Texas, Al Green, that he stood up and protested and was removed from the chamber and that the House later voted to censure him. And that a number of Democrats, I think it was 10 Democrats, actually voted in favor of the censure.

And these legislative systems and the way that they function, specifically in America. Because in other countries you see footage of like the British Parliament and they're talking over each other and debating things. And we can have a whole discussion over whether that's more constructive or not. But there's definitely allowance of [00:16:00] emotion. And it's not as much about decorum.

But in the US, we're really interested in being polite, to such a degree that we often tone police. Which, if you remember, if you missed episode 59 of the 'cult'ure series. I might actually do an encore run of that on the main feed, because it's so relevant to what we're

seeing now. And what in social psychology they call *display rules*. Which are sort of these, this is the way you're supposed to behave that govern behavior.

So if you think of, like a child who receives a gift that they don't like. The display rule is that they need to smile and say thank you. Or a little girl who has bodily autonomy but is forced to hug her uncle, because he's a family member. And she doesn't want to express that affection, but she's encouraged to do that. It's a display rule. The fact that women are told to smile constantly, even when we don't feel like it. Display rule.

So these display rules are part of these group norms. [00:17:00] And they're part of what sustains groupthink. It keeps it, like, as a structure. If you break a display rule, you've created that emotional tension, and you have broken the code of the groupthink that has been agreed upon.

These are things that function in our everyday society. And in our legislative branch of government, where people are elected to represent us, there's a real emphasis on the display rules of how you're supposed to conduct yourself.

So people are sitting in a room listening to a dictator deliver an address where he lies, I think it's something ungodly, like 159 times or something in a two hour period of time. And they're meant to sit calmly. And they have their little signs that they're holding up and they're trying to do things in a way that doesn't break the decorum that's been agreed upon for hundreds of years.

That is again, what is it in service to, right? So in the best case scenario, it's in service to [00:18:00] getting shit done and making sure that there's a peaceful transfer of power and that everyone has an opportunity to speak, and things that are really useful. But then we make it this sort of blanket thing, so that in the face of something that is entirely abnormal and undemocratic, people are expected to sit silently and grin and bear it.

So that's a great example of the way that groupthink is enforced and reinforced that has potentially global ramifications.

editorial note

Candice Schutter: So a super quick editorial note here.

As I mentioned, I recorded this episode a couple of weeks ago, and just before I planned to record the intro, my phone lit up with notification that the Conspirituality pod had dropped a new episode. And I bring it up now because in it, Matthew Remski delivers a highly informed analysis of anti-fascism and what has actually proven effective.

What I really appreciated is that he invites us to look closely [00:19:00] at how whitewash notions of non-violence in mainstream politics and in our communities is very often, quote "enabling racists through civility and appeasement."

He wants to know: "Is this idealized and self idealizing posture effective?"

It's an uncomfortable but important question, and I really recommend his examination of what he refers to as "political bypassing." It's a great supplement to this episode, so I'll link to it in the show notes.

Okay.

continued

Candice Schutter: Back to it.

Now, I'm not going to sit here and tell you I know exactly what our leadership needs to do on the Democratic side of things. But I know it's different than what they have been doing. And there are a few people really stepping forward and using their voices. That, again, it's a thorn in everyone's side.

And, I just want to say that, when you look at these dynamics that I speak to today, *right action is always* [00:20:00] *going to seem like an overreaction.*

So I want to say that again. Right action, when you're breaking the codes of society that keep us in line, keep us conforming with norms that we need to outgrow and change and deconstruct. That right action in favor of dismantling that is going to look like an overreaction. Because the group is trained and entrained to reinforce the social norms.

So that's one of the big takeaways today that I want to give all of us, myself included, is that when I go out in the world and I do the thing that is in a way like a record scratch moment for the people around me. That's okay. That's okay.

Now, of course, we could have a whole debate around how to constructively do that in ways that aren't aggressive, that are more emotionally intelligent, yada, yada, yada.

I just think that we need to really acknowledge that if we're doing the work of [00:21:00] challenging these systemic norms, it's gonna feel uncomfortable to us and to the people around us. And that's okay. That means we're on the right track.

But I digress.

One more thing related to groupthink is that research has shown that in a social environment it's really common that there are key individuals who step forward to reinforce whatever the hive mind is meant to express or not express. So this connects to the Flying Monkeys episodes, right? Or there's one episode in particular. But we speak about Flying Monkeys. And the individuals who really consider it their duty to step forward and enforce group norms and groupthink. This is something that happens not just in wellness communities, that happens all the world over, happens in organizations and companies and governments as well, as we know. We're experiencing it, all of it. [00:22:00]

So, what can we do to prevent groupthink as a norm? As I said, speaking up is key. But in a group situation, because any one of us could fall under the spell of sort of tapping into that

consciousness, what do we do in terms of how we structure our groups to diminish the likelihood of the hive mind becoming sort of this conformed way of behaving, feeling, and responding to situations.

Again, this is according to research, and there's quite a number of things, but I'm going to share three with you. The first one is that we can make our groups as diverse as possible. So this is where bringing in people from different cultures, ages, races, socioeconomic classes, gender identities, abilities, all the things.

Groupthink is amplified by homogeneity. So the more homogenous the group is, the more everyone in the group is the same, the more likely groupthink is gonna kick in and be [00:23:00] operating. When there's diversity, it's less likely to happen. So the more diverse we can make our groups the better.

Secondly, people who are in leadership or who are considered authorities within the group, um, maybe who are more liked, more popular, for reasons, that's a whole other episode, how that happens. Whether we want them to be the most liked or popular or whether they deserve it or not, that's another debate. That exists in any group.

Those people should be invited to speak last. Because those people have a exponential amount of influence. And when they speak, hive mind kicks in. Because people want to conform with the people who are most liked. It's just part of our nature. So, encouraging leadership and people with influence to defer to voices of diversity within the group. And to just take the pulse of the group before adding their input. That's another way to [00:24:00] diminish the likelihood that groupthink is gonna be operating and running the show.

Something again that we don't do enough in leadership in this country. There are so many talented and amazing voices on the democratic side of things who are brave and interesting and have so much to share. I think of people like AOC. I think of Jasmine Crockett. I think Pete Buttigieg does this in his own way. He's such a great bridge for, sort of that old school and new school in the way that he communicates. He's an exceptional communicator. That if we were to elevate people that are younger and have diverse opinions and aren't afraid to challenge norms. Instead of having the Chuck Schumers speak on behalf of the party, maybe we invite somebody who is a little less conventional to be at the mic.

And then the third way to counteract groupthink is to appoint or [00:25:00] encourage the devil's advocate. Sometimes, you know, the devil's advocate can be a certain kind of personality style. Like somebody who has a tendency to challenge the way that people automatically think about things or the default setting. So it might be a particular person that you encourage to speak their mind a bit more. It could also be, in some leadership settings and organizations, they actually recommend that at the beginning of a meeting that you actually appoint somebody to be the devil's advocate. And you say okay, your job is to, every time we come up with an idea, is to challenge and to offer a different vantage point.

So encouraging devil's advocacy. And when it gets in the way of efficiency or a false sense of quote unquote peace, to really actually celebrate it instead. And be like, wow, thank you for saying something divergent and giving us a new way of thinking about this and let's sit with

that. And if we feel a little bit uncomfortable, let's just name it, and let's talk about why. And let's look at it a little [00:26:00] bit more closely.

So those are just three ways that we can, all of us, create a culture where groupthink isn't just operating and we're all just kind of zombying through this world while the shit hits the fan and chaos ensues.

So, that's the first piece that I wanted to share.

Okay, secondly, another observation of social psychologists that I feel like is super important for us to keep our mind eyes open to is what's known as the theory of reactance.

And, just a heads up, like all things related to humans, it's slightly paradoxical based on what we were just talking about in terms of groupthink. Because this is sort of when the pendulum swings in the other direction.

So reactance is what we experience psychologically when our sense of freedom is threatened and we seek to restore it.

That doesn't sound like a bad thing, right? Restoring personal agency, that's a good thing. So, when we [00:27:00] feel backed into a corner, we're animals. We act like any animal, and we seek to restore our sense of self and autonomy. That, again, is a very good thing.

However, we can be a little bit over reactive when it comes to this. When our sense of choice is diminished, the desire for the thing that is being denied to us increases.

So the way that this shows up in our current culture, especially in this age of digital digital information slash misinformation, is when an institution of authority or science says about something, that's not true. As soon as that information goes underground, it is more desirable to a specific group of people, because it's being denied. They want to believe it more.

And you see this happening so much with the conspiracy theories. So many conspiracy theories flying around, right? [00:28:00] Everything becomes a part of the conspiracy. The science that opposes the conspiracy is part of the conspiracy. Like, it's just this sort of snowball of reactance, of like, oh, they don't want us to look at this thing, so therefore it must be of great value.

This is happening like crazy, right now. And, it's important to understand, when you're talking to somebody who, immediately gets defensive when you tell them like, Hey. I mean, this happens, this has happened to me quite a lot in the last couple of years where I'll question something and the skeptic in me comes forward with a fact that says, you know, X, Y, and Z, this, this is evidence that doesn't support that. And the person sort of doubles down, triples down and guards with their life, because I have combated their misinformation with fact, that actually makes them feel as though I am taking away their right to their misinformation and therefore they need to cling to it more tightly.

[00:29:00] It's just something to understand as a part of human nature. And it's the reason why censorship doesn't work all that well. Because when something is censored, the research has shown this again and again, when something is censored, people want it more. Not all people, obviously. But the people who want it, they want it more. And they're more likely to go to sort of extreme places in terms of getting that information.

So having constructive dialogues takes more time than censoring things. Educating people takes more time. But it's worth it. Because it, it actually works better in the long run.

I see this happen a lot in wellness arenas, where if it's quote unquote natural, if it's disconnected from a public or government institution, then it is just assumed to be better or true. Like there's a lack of critical thinking specifically around things that are [00:30:00] unregulated. There's an acceptance of things that don't necessarily make rational sense, but because they're not a part of the mainstream or because they go against, I should say, what's pushed through the mainstream, they're almost elevated to like a sacred level. Like, oh, this absolutely must be true, because there's no science to back it.

And that sounds counterintuitive, but when you understand reactance, it's not really. It makes perfect sense.

So it's just something else I wanted to throw out there, because it's a big thing right now. There's a lot of reactance going on, especially online.

And, um, yeah, I don't have a turnkey solution for this. But, I'm finding when I respond to people with the facts who are operating from a place that isn't connected to a sense of reason or a sense of humanity and empathy, really, that I stay as grounded as I can, and I continue to speak up. [00:31:00] I'm not always given those opportunities, but when I am, I try to take them.

So, the final piece that I wanted to touch upon today is a concept known as pluralistic ignorance. This is, to me, the most concerning thing that we are facing.

Pluralistic ignorance is a thing that happens when we are faced with uncertainty or overwhelm, and usually a combination of the two.

So I'm going to zoom in a little bit in terms of an example, and then we'll zoom back out. So some of you maybe have heard the story of Kitty Genovese, a real life thing that happened in New York many years ago, where a woman was assaulted on the street outside of an apartment building. And there were a lot of people who heard what was going on down on the street. The assailant came, he attacked her, he left, and he came back and attacked her again. And she was shouting and screaming. And this entire building of people who, [00:32:00] are not, you know, there was a whole critique going on of like, is it because they live in New York, and they're desensitized to this, that, and the other? They've done all kinds of follow up research and stuff, and they don't think that that's what it was. Because they've done research in people who live in cities and rural environments and all these different things. This dynamic could happen anywhere, where there's diffusion of responsibility. And because there's so many people who are witnessing something, and because it's a little bit

unclear what's happening, nobody responds to the situation. Nobody called for help. It's a really tragic example, and a cautionary tale for all of us.

Pluralistic ignorance is what was happening. There's a uncertain situation. There's a lack of clarity in terms of what is happening. And there's a lot of other people who are witnessing the thing that we're witnessing and our brains almost scramble. Like nobody else is doing anything, so that must be the thing to do is nothing.

[00:33:00] There was also a study I read about in prisons with men who'd been in prison for a long period of time. And that each of them individually expressed this desire that they wanted to be more vulnerable and open. But that they believed, each of them individually, believed that everyone else in the group didn't want that. And so none of them would individually step forward. Because they had a belief, based on what they were witnessing, that was entirely false.

So it creates sort of a false sense of consensus. We assume that the experience that we're having internally, psychologically, emotionally is an anomaly and that nobody else feels the way we do. It's sort of like a freeze response that happens collectively.

I mean, look at the Org. Look at these stories that we shared, and we're all thinking, this is just me experiencing this thing. And we have told ourselves the story, which I may be challenging a little bit that, oh, the reason why we didn't speak up was because we were conditioned [00:34:00] by the Org and the practices and the dogma, and we want to blame all of that. And there's some truth to that. That's part of it.

And also, this is a thing that happens in groups.

Period. Full stop.

And that that silence is something that we have to overcome.

So, you know, I talked about groupthink, like we fall into this sort of hive mind. But really, when I talk to people and I think back on my own experiences, I wasn't sitting in the intensive going, oh, yeah, that's totally fine the way that Marissa is flexing power in this specific situation. I wasn't thinking like, that's great, I have no problem with it. I was thinking, this feels weird. And then I'd scan the room, and it seemed like everyone else was doing what I did. We are emotionally intelligent enough to regulate ourselves, yay for us, gold star. We can regulate our responses so much that we have a mask of composure that doesn't crack in the face of a situation where we should be appalled and saying what the [00:35:00] actual fuck is happening here.

But we don't do that, because pluralistic ignorance. We look around, we're like, I guess this is okay.

And I think that that's in danger of happening here in the US where we look around and we're like, well, nobody else is doing anything, saying anything. You know, internally people are maybe a little uncomfortable with this, but how uncomfortable? When in reality, most of us

are like bingeing, you know, a tub of Ben and Jerry's to make it through the night, because we're like, the fucking world is a dumpster fire, and oh my god. But then we go to work, and we go to school, and we engage in our communities as if everything is normal.

And I'm not saying that we walk around complaining and upset all the time. But take a chance. Be the one in the room who's really honest. Because chances are you're going to voice the thing that a lot of people are feeling but not saying.

And this is a call for all of us to do more of [00:36:00] that.

I'm going to give another example. They've done research in situations where they sort of invent a crisis. So they have a field research study where they just go out into an everyday situation and a person falls to the ground and pretends to be having an epileptic seizure. And they want to see how many people will come to aid. The less people there are around, say there's one, two, maybe three people, much more likely somebody is going to respond. As soon as the group gets bigger, response goes down significantly. The more people there are, the more responsibility is diffused, the less likely somebody is to intervene in an urgent crisis.

Now, what do you do to diminish pluralistic ignorance when you're in a situation where there's a group and nobody's responding?

Well, first is the thing we've been talking about all this time. Like, right action is going to seem like an overreaction. So, be the person who steps forward.

But let's say you're the person in crisis, and you [00:37:00] need people to step forward. Like, marginalized populations right now need people, especially people with privilege, to step forward.

What they recommend, if you're the person in distress on the ground, is provide clarity and direction.

You've probably experienced this if you've been in a CPR training they tell you to do this. Like if you go to the person's aid, you point at a specific individual. You don't say somebody call 911. You point at a specific person. Because people want to do good. They want to do right. They just don't know if they're the one who should do it.

So you call them out you say, hey, Sam, go call 911 right now. And Sally, go get me the defibrillator, whatever it is that needs to happen. You're really specific. You tell who, what to do.

We can do that collectively right now.

And the people who are doing the best advocacy work right now are not only speaking up, but they're telling people what actions to take. The app to [00:38:00] sign up for, the phone calls to make, the issues that are most important. Like, I think most of us want to do something, but we don't know what to do and so we're paralyzed.

So, it's twofold.

We want to be the people who step up and call out actions when we know and we have the clarity. We want to delegate and help people to find a sense of responsibility and clarity. And we also want to seek out connection with people who will provide us with that.

So the people that we follow aren't just giving us information, but they're giving us a clear path in terms of what we can do about the situations that we're in.

And I am going to have a conversation soon with Susan McCulley who's been a friend of the pod for a long time. We did two episodes with her early on in the Deconstructing Dogma series, Tracy and I did. And then I had her on the main feed last year for a discussion about body image stuff. And she's a very good friend of the pod. And she has a community on Facebook, people coming together. [00:39:00] And there's a lot of people posting on there in terms of actions.

And so that's a really great way too, to kind of combat this pluralistic ignorance, is to find a group of people who are interested in, what can we do to kind of wake ourselves up from the trance of complacency just simply because we don't have the clarity or direction. Like how can we help each other through that?

So I'm going to link to that community in this episode.

And we all have a different role to play in this, in the way that we show up. Right action feels like an overreaction. Because in some way you are shatters the group norm. It breaks the cultural mold. It um, snaps people out of the spell of the hive mind.

This is a constructive use of reactance, right? Our freedom to be who we are as we are authentically is being stripped away from us. And we want to reclaim that freedom in a constructive way. And rather than doubling down on [00:40:00] nonsense and misinformation and conspiracy theories, we can double down on who we are. And say like, yeah, I am going to upset the norm, because this is who I am. And my place in the world is to be who I am and to contribute to this movement that is one where there's a sense of diversity versus conformity.

And we're all moving the needle in the direction of something that is more just and democratic and fair. But we're all doing it a different way. And it's this idea that there's only one true north that keeps us paralyzed, I think.

It's just like, well, I don't feel like I'm the person who protests in the street. Or I'm not the person who calls my people. Or I'm not the person who does X, Y, and Z. Stop worrying about who you're not, and think about who you are, and what you're good at. And lend that to the cause. [00:41:00]

Thanks for joining me today. In this episode, I made reference to quite a lot of research. And it would've felt pretty dry had I taken the time to credit every academic source while I spoke.

TDP #86 – Hive Mind Paralysis & How We Break Free

So in lieu of that, I have listed a number of the resources that I referred to in the show notes, if you're interested.

And full disclosure, now that I'm back, it's gonna be a little bit of challenge for me to balance podcast production and graduate studies. And so now more than ever, I'm relying on patrons of the podcast.

If you're a new listener, you may not know that I have developed quite an allergy to late stage capitalism and am therefore stubbornly determined to keep this platform ad free. Which means that I'm only able to do this work as long as I have the support of listeners out there. So if you made it this far and you have experienced something of value, I hope you'll consider becoming a patron of the [00:42:00] podcast. You can join for as little as \$5 a month, and you'll gain immediate access to over a hundred hours of bonus content. If you're interested in learning more, you can go to patreon.com/thedeeperpulse.

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thanks again for tuning in. I'll see you next time. [00:43:00]