

## Alchemy

### Three Character Approaches to Climate Change

Dis is a seven year old who often can hear his/her parents fighting bitterly at night. During the day, s/he observes that his/her mother is angry, and that his/her father is anxious. When s/he has asked them if they are having these experiences, they have told him/her that all is well, and have rejected his/her inquiries. When s/he hears the fighting, his/her stomach turns, and his/her heart freezes.

Every morning Dis's home is orderly, a perfect breakfast is served, and Dis is paraded off to achieve in school wearing clean clothes. Dis's caretakers do not offer an age appropriate supportive explanation of the emotional storms that s/he is instinctively aware of. The unspoken direction that they give him/her is, "Don't feel it. It isn't real. Sever from your real self that is having a personal experience. Believe in a false positive world. Do things for outer gain." The brain scans that match the disassociated character type show high frequency activity in the frontal lobes, with brain frequencies decreasing towards the occipital region in the back of the head. Sadly, being split from an inner connection with his/her deeper feelings, Dis can voraciously pursue all sorts of outer achievements, and never feel the value and meaning of them, or of our world. Dis grows up to be a high achiever, a manager in a position to make decisions.

Dis is both a character of a made up story, and a character that lives in all of us to some degree. Every night that we go to sleep another 82 to 109 million tons of human made carbon dioxide has been pumped into our air. The United Nations chose ninety one scientists from forty countries to guide world leaders on the topic of climate change. These specialists analyzed more than 6,000 scientific studies, and presented their findings in September 2018. We are on course for the atmosphere to warm up by as much as

2.7 degrees Fahrenheit (1.5 degrees Celsius) by 2040. Should this occur, here are some of the major impacts. Four hundred million people will be suffering from drought. Food shortages will be increased with 15% of food crops eliminated. Say goodbye to coral reefs, because the vast majority of them live at cooler temperatures. Coastlines will be inundated with a 12 meter ocean level rise, and no coral reef protection. The cost is estimated to be 54 trillion dollars. Although change is possible to avoid the warming, it looks unlikely that Dis character types in management positions will address the issue.

It's an easy fit for our Dis character parts. Uphold authoritarian status quo, follow misinformation from a person in command, don't understand or share vulnerable feelings, and keep it all looking good. Experiencing painful realities is not on the disassociated agenda.

These days there is a measurement of how we as individuals relate to dominance between social groups. It's called our Social Dominance Orientation. Those of us that pay no heed to climate change are higher on the SDO scale. SDO high scorers avoid negative emotions (great to avoid depression), and endorse the dominant status quo. They believe that society should have some groups with more resources and power, and others with less. They believe that humans should be dominant over nature. Climate change is primarily caused by those with wealthier lifestyles, but low GDP tropical island countries, animals, and upcoming generations will have the most immediate consequences from the man made creation of climate change. In the long run, we are all impacted. People with low SDO scored are oriented to no group dominating another.

Let's suppose that Dis had a next door neighbor named Mel. Mel had virtually the same scenario happening in his/her home that Dis did. Mel's caretakers gave no particular acknowledgement of their difficulties, nor indication that they could heal. However Mel

didn't get the clean and perfect exterior cover up. When Mel slumped out the door to school in disheveled clothes, s/he felt heavy and disoriented, and was not an uber high achiever. S/he followed direction, but s/he remained a follower. When Mel is informed about the causes and impacts of global warming, s/he feels powerless. S/he can not imagine the problem being resolved. Problems exist as part of reality, and get worse, and that's just that.

We all have a Mel part as well. Melancholia grows from feeling powerless. It's an easy downward spiral. A cause and a symptom. Mel has a leaning towards masochism. Brain patterns of masochistic character types show high frequency activity surrounded by low frequency waves in a central area of the occiput. Also they show high frequency activity in the parietal, ventricle, and frontal lobe areas. When we think a familiar thought, our brain recognizes the habitual, and makes these routine thoughts easier for us. It provides more blood supply and white matter to speed up our process. The brain doesn't distinguish between positive or negative, it simply helps us have more of what ever we are accustomed to. Thus, if we are depressed, finding a pathway out of those thought patterns gets harder and harder. With this cloud cover, our ability to plan is diminished. For our Mel character parts, the stats on climate change will simply pile on top of more negative images, and bury us in further darkness. Gravity makes descent easy. It requires more initial energy to raise our perspective to a higher one.

Enter fictitious neighbor Sol. Sol grew up across the street from Dis and Mel, and could recognize their pain. All of the marriages on the street were struggling. Sol's folks however had two major differences in how they approached their troubles. One, they fessed up to their difficulties, and two, they were hot on the trail of how to resolve them. When Sol would ask his/her father if he was anxious, his father admitted that he was. His/her mother agreed that she was angry. Sol's parents spoke to him/her in an age

appropriate way, explaining that they were going to better manage their disagreements with new approaches of how they listened to each other. Sol got validation for his intuitive internal perceptions, and he had the opportunity to watch the challenge and benefit of learning new behaviors. Perfect character development to approach climate change effectively. We will all be drawing on those Sol experiences to bring us through. Note: the brain scans of healthy responders appear to be balanced overall with some higher frequency waves on the left frontal portion of the brain.

Indeed there are powerful solutions on the forefront which help us envision a thriving future. New solar and wind technologies are estimated to help us avoid nearly one third of our world's emissions. Reforesting sequesters carbon. Ethiopia, Uganda, and other like minded countries are planning to restore 865 million acres of forest. It's projected that we could potentially reclaim five billion acres of forest worldwide, which would be most helpful indeed.

Thing is though, that the world's existing power plants are on track to discharge over 300 billion tons of carbon dioxide before they are due to shut down. Be that as it may, ingenuity knows no bounds. Take a look at the start up Global Thermostat. This company is capturing CO<sub>2</sub>, and alchemizing it to a reliable source of CO<sub>2</sub> for which there is a 1 trillion dollar market demand. Rather than energy being drawn from electricity, it is provided by residual heat from those incongruous power plants. This is keeping costs low. The process can be added on site to just about any industrial facility to turn it CO<sub>2</sub> negative. Those inappropriately discharged CO<sub>2</sub>s are becoming biofertilizers, greenhouses, desalinated water, and building materials. No kidding.

Here's another Sol hero: Climeworks captures carbon in water, heats it to 100° C (212° F), cools it to 45° C (113° F), and drives it into basalt wells where it reacts with elements like calcium, magnesium, and iron. Initially it costed around US\$600 to capture

a single ton of CO<sub>2</sub>, but that amount is coming significantly down to around US\$115. In less than two years, 95% of the CO<sub>2</sub> is converted to solid carbonate minerals. It can then become good as gold, or climate neutral fuel.

It's estimated that to prevent global warming the use of coal as an electricity source on Earth would have to drop from being near 40% to being between 1% to 7%. Collaborating with these carbon capture technologies, coal could continue to be widely used. This overcomes an enormous obstacle in lowering our world temperature.

Recognize the ill-judged , alter our approach, and transform the situation into an offering that is valuable. Sounds just like any human being growing from his/her mistakes. This is different than coping with adversity. It is nurturing brain connections that give us strength. The ability to hold the belief that we can create the inner states, and the circumstances, that we want to live in is a most profound factor in our modern life. When we work together to recapture our healthy essence we have meaning, and we promote the long-term success of both our inner and outer landscapes.

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