

CHAPTER 29

After having read this far through the book you will have decided on whether you are a member of the fraction of the population that is anti this plague that infests the lives of those with epilepsy, or if you are a member of the fraction of the population that spreads the plague. I would hope that you have either remained anti the plague or have been converted into becoming anti- plague.

If you are truly left wing or centre right, but not extreme right; then I would hope the next time you meet someone with epilepsy or any other neurological condition, you would be non-judgemental of them and treat them as equals, as to treat them the opposite way leads to a lifetime of issues that can result in a fatality in those less equipped to cope. Such behaviour of the mainstream towards people with epilepsy, in the knowledge that this behaviour will cause mental health issues and possibly a fatality, is on a par with torture, in the knowledge that torture can cause death. The mental torture as well as fatalities that western society is responsible for in those with complex partial epilepsy, has and continues to make me feel that western society commemorating armistice day should be seen as double standards by those affected by complex partial epilepsy. It is because of western society being guilty of double standards, evidenced by my own experiences living in western society, that I cannot bring myself to commemorating 'Armistice Day'. Most people are capable of cooperating in mass genocide if the order to kill is given by an authoritative figure. This was proven in an experiment carried out by a psychologist called Milgram, at Yale University in 1963. Milgram's experiment involved taking a sample of men from a cross section of society and ordering them to administer electric shocks to a human. These shocks increased from zero volts right up to 450 volts, where two thirds of participants would keep administering increases in electric shocks when ordered to do so up until the 300 volt mark and the remaining third were prepared to keep administering shocks right up to the 450 volt mark. Milgram concluded from this that most humans are prepared to kill someone if the order is given from an authoritative figure. I therefore see the vast majority of the public as being a potential nazi as well as a potential Hitler right hand man when this was the defence that Hitler's right hand men used when they were tried for their war crimes i.e. "I was acting under orders". This theory proven by Milgram would certainly explain how colleagues/mentors have managed with a free conscience to participate in the constructive dismissal of myself from jobs and courses. In my last job, where evidence was constructed to put me in a position where I either resigned or got sacked, one of the participating members of staff had been a man who I had been getting on with really well for the previous few days until I was asked to accompany him to a client's home, where he asked me on route what the address was, which I said I did not know as I believed him to have the address. This colleague suddenly turned nasty and shouted at me, "Isn't that very stupid? Going to a client's home and not taking with you the address" in the most hostile way. This guy had gone from good friend to aggressive bully in a matter of a few working hours under the instruction of someone from above. While these moments of unexplained hostility was coming from those outside the office, others in the office were fiddling with rotas under the orders of authority..... More on this later.

Last Armistice Day I thought to myself that every discriminator, judgemental person, bully, person who just stands back and watches the discrimination, non-genuine person who disappoints, person who back stabs and therefore can't trust, greedy person, selfish person; and every person obsessed with wealth, power and status (the three things being the roots of all wars) will be wearing a poppy today. What double standards. What I can say is that living with epilepsy, anxiety and depression has made me the opposite of all these things and has made me a less dangerous individual; yet I am probably more likely of spending some of my years behind bars than any of these people. It is also because of these other peoples' behaviours and their inability to stand firm against authority, that

people like me have the relationship difficulties that we have and find ourselves having to wear the label of “Personality Disorder”, thus, evidencing society and her people to be the cause of so much ill health. It is also because of all these people you find wearing poppies on Armistice Day that 1 in 7 people with my type of epilepsy will be pushed into attempting to take their own lives. The truth is this country’s people are as dangerously right wing and capable of ruthless treatment of vulnerable people as race hatred groups are of those who belong to different ethnic minorities.

I want to emphasise the strengths of the minds and brains of people with epilepsy, as we only focus on the weaknesses. Every epilepsy charity I visit only provides services for those with learning disability who have needs that cannot be met in mainstream society. This creates the illusion amongst the mainstream that epilepsy is a condition, which all people who suffer from are also affected by learning disability. This image of epilepsy seriously compromises those with epilepsy without learning disability, living in this judgemental world.

It is the case that 40% of people with epilepsy have a learning disability, which can be anything from mild to severe. When I worked at the Epilepsy Society, the residents I looked after had poorly controlled epilepsy, co-existing with moderate to severe learning disability. What we are not told anything about is the other 60% of people with epilepsy in terms of their cognition.

I have now been meditating morning and night since December 2013, but I only started meditating consistently morning and night since September 2017. During my time as a meditator I have had afternoons where I have sat on the couch that I meditate on, analysed my behaviour and looked at the rationales behind both my behaviours and decisions that I make, and noticed patterns in my behaviour that evidence many things about myself as a person, allowing me to understand myself better. My meditation practice also has me look at the behaviours of others that I have noticed in my forty three years of being a civilian living in British society in academic, vocational, commercial, social etc settings; and have noticed the rationales behind their behaviours, the decisions that they make, as well as patterns in behaviours, thus, being able to draw conclusions about the mainstream population. I have also been able to do the same psychoanalysis of those with severe to high functioning learning disability. It is from these afternoons of psychoanalysing the world, as well as myself, that I have been able to find a number of theories that explains me, the mainstream population, and those with learning disability that might explain my isolation and incompatibilities that have existed between myself and mainstream society. These are theories that maybe psychiatrists would say are evidence of a ‘Personality Disorder’. I disagree with what the psychiatrists would conclude from these theories, and instead see these theories as evidence of strengths and qualities the world is scared of other people having as well as being evidence of having undergone a lot of personal development.

These theories, are theories that I made no deliberate attempt to create. They are theories that just naturally surfaced in my mind during three of my depressive days, where I have found myself getting up at 10.00am and going through to the lounge to sit on my couch all day, and still find myself in my vest and boxer shorts at 4pm that same afternoon. The fruition of these theories I believe to be “spiritual awakenings”, that one who meditates experiences when they get to a milestone in the progress they are making through their meditation practice. They do say that before a spiritual awakening your symptoms can temporarily worsen which would explain why I have had these awakenings on depressive days. As already mentioned, meditation makes you a human psychologist who has done their training at the “University of Living with Anxiety and Depression”.

One thing that came to my attention while I was sitting on my couch a couple of years ago while I was asking myself why I couldn’t make any friends and didn’t have a single relationship in the world

other than with my father, was the fact that all meetup groups I had been attending either had people show up with a friend, as they did not like turning up for the first time on their own, or they came alone but they had already become a regular. I had also met people at meetups who had come on their own who confessed to me that they had to have a few drinks to get tipsy before coming that evening. I then asked myself, "Where are most people's friends from?". After asking this question I remembered my aunt saying that there are only two times people meet new friends for life after school and they are university/higher education or outside the school gates picking up your children. I then disagreed with this to myself as there are people who still have friends that they work in the same workplace with, play sport with, are members of the same club or society as, or some other type of institution. It then came to me. That was the problem. The vast majority of people in our society can only meet people through being members of an "institution". Institution is required to get people meeting, crossing paths with one another often enough on a regular basis, before becoming confident enough to let their guard down and form relationships with one another, which includes the formation of friendships. I realised that I had not been a member of an institution that I belonged in nor provided for opportunities to meet up with others beyond the "gates" of that institution since July 1997, when I was at Glasgow University. Since July 1997, I was either a member of an institution where my peers were too financially hard up to have any time to socialise, or an institution where the staff had a judgemental attitude towards me because of my epilepsy or felt threatened by me as a result of having more knowledge/ability than them in an area they saw as being their expertise. I also avoided some institutions such as sport teams due to my performance anxiety, thus, barring me from forming new friendships through the playing of games and sports. It also came to my awareness that I could instinctively generate conversation with anyone in any place due to a high level of social confidence acquired from living a very unique life which had given me a very high "sense of self"; where I had developed views, beliefs, opinions etc that I was eager to share with people, thus, allowing me to overcome the confidence barriers that most people are affected by when meeting new people for the first time outside of an institution setting. I came to realise that I don't need institution to form new friendships with people, but these prospective new friends do require institution to form friendships with me, resulting in the isolation of myself. This is an example of where a strength can appear like a weakness, and explains why someone with my social skills can't form a friendship but can arrange a meeting with Occupational Therapy and convince them into reversing their decision on adapting a person's bathroom; or successfully mediate with an anti-social neighbour who has been bullying a client of mine affected by learning disability. People think social skills are communication skills that get you the approval of others, which is why they would draw conclusions about your social skills by the number of friendships you have, but the truth is there are many different types of social skills such as assertiveness, having a presence, debating, initiation and maintenance of conversation with strangers, good articulation, ability to empathise, ability to mediate, ability to educate/inform, ability to lie and manipulate, peer pressure resistance, insightfulness and intuition and I'm sure you can think of other.

After discovering this theory over the reliance on institution most people have in forming new friendships, it came to my attention that the reasons for this reliance is because our culture does not encourage the developing of friendship formation skills independent of institution as a result of having us in nursery, followed by school and workplace/institute of higher education. This confining us to an institutional way of living is further encouraged by segregating us into families, clique of existing friends, membership of recreational clubs and societies; being experienced alongside the previous mentioned institutions that shape you into a contributing member of society or exclude you i.e. nursery/school/workplace/institute of higher education. Recreational clubs and societies could also be described as being forms of institution. This made me realise that we.....