

From Darkness to Light: Understanding Violence

The Nature of Emotion

Emotions are *desires* either to perpetuate a situation if pleasurable, or to escape out of it if painful.

The emotion thus begin in, and looks back to, a feeling of positive Pleasure and Pain, and looks forward to, and ends in, a possible Pleasure or Pain.

Bhagavan Das, *The Science of Emotions*

Primary Emotions

Emotions are desires, and the two elementary desires are:

(i) the desire to unite with an object that causes pleasure;

(ii) the desire to separate from an object which causes pain;

in other words, attraction and repulsion, like and dislike, love and hate.

The Science of the Emotions

The Nature of Love

Love, the desire to unite with something else, implies the consciousness of the possibility of such union, and that its full significance is this:

an instinctive, ingrained, inherent perception by each individual self of its essential underlying unity, oneness, with all other selves.

The Science of the Emotions

The Nature of Hate

Hate is the instinctive perception by each self of the non-identity, the inherent separateness, the manyness, of each other self, each atom of Matter, from every other atom, every other not-self, and its endeavour to maintain such separate existence at all costs and by all means.

The Science of Emotions

Understanding Emotions (I)

An emotion is a desire *plus* the cognition involved in the attitude of one soul towards another.

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Understanding Emotions (II)

Emotion is only a form of motion; motion *towards* an object, or *away from* it, in the mind, is emotion.

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Understanding Emotions (III)

An emotion is a desire in one individual to associate with or dissociate from another individual, *plus* an intellectual cognition of the latter's superiority, equality, or inferiority, with reference to possible voluntary or forcible exchange of pleasures or pains between them.

The Science of Emotions

Violence: meaning of the word

Violation: from Latin *violationem*, ‘an injury, irreverence’, from *violare*, ‘to violate, treat with violence, outrage, dishonor’, perhaps related to *vis*, ‘violence, strength’.

Violent: intense, vehement, passionate, furious, impetuous, vivid.

Sanskrit definitions

Dvesha: 'hatred, dislike, repugnance, enmity to'. From *dvish*, 'to hate, show hatred against, be hostile or unfriendly'.

Dvi: 'two'.

Light from the Yoga Sutras

Dvesha is the natural repulsion felt towards any person or object which is a source of pain or unhappiness to us. The essential nature of the Self is blissful and therefore anything which brings pain or unhappiness in the outer world makes the outer vehicles recoil from that thing.

We are tied to the person we hate perhaps more firmly than the person we love, because the personal love can be transformed into impersonal love easily and then loses its binding power. But it is not so easy to transmute the force of hatred and the poison generated by it is removed from one's nature with great difficulty.

I. K. Taimni, *The Science of Yoga*

The Birth of Emotion

Emotion is not a simple or primary state of consciousness, but it is a compound made up by the interaction of two aspects of the Self – Desire and Intellect. The play of Intellect on Desire gives birth to Emotion; it is the child of both, and shows some of the characteristics of its father, Intellect, as well as of its mother, Desire.

Annie Besant, A Study in Consciousness

The Twins

Love and Hatred are the only immortal feelings, the only survivors from the wreck of Ye-dhamma, or the phenomenal world.

Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett

Ending Violence

He abused me, he injured me, he overcame me, he deprived me: for them who entertain such thoughts, enmity does not abate.

He abused me, he injured me, he overcame me, he deprived me: for them who do not entertain such thoughts, enmity abates completely.

Enmities do not abate here at any time through enmity; and they abate through friendliness. This is the eternal *Dharma* (Law).

Dhammapada

The Source of All Violence

The 'me' is the root of all this; the 'me' is identified with a particular nation, with a particular community, with a particular ideology or religious fancy. The 'me' identifies with a certain prejudice, the 'me' says 'I must fulfil'; and when it feels frustrated, there is anger and bitterness. It is the 'me' that says, 'I must reach my goal, I must be successful', that wants and doesn't want, that says 'I must live peacefully', and it is the 'me' that gets violent.

J. Krishnamurti, *The Awakening of Intelligence*