

How does it feel to not hate the person but hate the behavior? How do I even recognize that if it's ever occurring in me? Like the guy who killed the woman runner in Texas recently -- I feel such rage that I don't know how to not hate him. I can tell myself intellectually that he's had great suffering that would cause him to act this way, but from the neck down I still feel nothing but raw hatred.

You are trying to do a spiritual by-pass to get to loving without doing the inner work, because it is not yet clear to you how to do this. The inner work requires deep inner self-reflection that requires the ability to ask yourself questions about how you have been a victim, and then secondly, how you have been a perpetrator and be able to hold both victim in the tenderness and firmness of love. We cannot tell ourselves to be compassionate and think that knowing this will make it so, as you so rightly realize.

First of all, let's ask some questions. "What is under my rage?" "What is the trigger?" "What need is not being met?"

I do not know the story you refer to, but some questions to consider might be, "Who has tried to run me over in my life?" "Who has unpredictably come up behind me and slammed into me nearly killing me, either literally or metaphorically?" "Who has threatened my life and safety?" "How have I been ambushed?" "How did the person doing this to me get away with it?" "Ignore it?" "Not care what was happening to me?"

Can you see the underlying childhood need for safety and how it was violated? Can you feel what that child felt? Do you, as an adult even care? Can you find caring? Can you tell her the truth about what happened - namely that it was not her fault and that what happened does not mean anything bad or wrong about her? Can you reassure her that these feelings in the present, are the memory of what happened long ago, and that she survived it? Can you see that that past experience is right here in the NOW. All moments are in this moment. Until you are willing to connect to the memory of emotions and needs underlying your own rage, there is no possibility of connecting to the feelings underlying someone else's feelings and needs, i.e. have compassion. All defense arises out of suffering.

The rage of a child whose life and safety is threatened is pure and right. When it is not accepted and owned it is buried and then displaced all over the world on to other people, without being able to see clearly into oneself, the other person or the circumstance. As such it is now self-righteous anger.

Now having connected to the original victimization with compassion and wisdom can you find the perpetrator in you and ask the same questions. This is a little harder. Perhaps you have never killed someone accidentally or on purpose - but the dynamic is known to us - very well. We kill with our words, our inattentiveness, our unawareness, our distractibility, our judgements and our hatred..... and on and on.

How have you attacked or "killed" something or someone, including your young self, in words, thought or deed? How have you been unpredictable and ambushed people including your young self? How have you pretended or denied that you did anything, including to your young self? How have you not paid attention and made a mistake - big or small, including with your young self? How have you not been mindful of the needs of others, including your young self, and hurt them? How have you not kept yourself safe or others safe? What motivated this? What emotions underly your own perpetration? What needs are you trying to get met by perpetrating, deliberately or in unawareness? How much shame and judgment do you have for this, that you do not want to face?

It is important to recognize that behavior and thoughts are different to who you are at your core? Can you see that essentially, you do not want to live a defensive life ruled by unaware and unmet emotional needs? Can you see that you have done the best you could with the awareness you have had? Can you be merciful to

yourself without excusing yourself from responsibility? Do you still hate yourself if you make a mistake? Do you still damn and attack yourself intrinsically, instead of seeing the depth of suffering resulting in your defenses and lack of awareness and attention?

Hatred is anger with the goal of hurting oneself or another in some way. This is ultimately self-righteous anger because we cannot see the perpetrator in ourselves and cannot see that all our perpetration came from the fear, shame, helplessness and the needs of a small child. We cannot see that we were good kids and when bad things happened to us we learned to defend against our feelings in ways that are destructive and life sapping in the long run, even if they provide some momentary relief through for instance, the false power of hatred and superiority.

Righteous anger is the anger that sees how the defenses are destructive and out of great love and deep wisdom and unmitigated fierceness says, "No," to hatred.

Self-righteous anger is an expression of hate.

Righteous anger is Love in action

Self-righteous anger damns both the person and the behavior.

Righteous anger sets limits with the behavior out of love for the person

Self-righteous anger makes assumptions and judgments about others without any awareness or knowledge about the other person

Righteous anger seeks to understand deeply so as to set appropriate and loving limits

Self-righteous anger blames the other

Righteous anger examines inner responses to the other and finds the perpetrator and victim within

Self-righteous anger divides the world according to the split of good/bad within

Righteous anger brings both the inner and outer victim and perpetrator into the embrace of Love and Truth

Self-righteous anger seeks revenge

Righteous anger demands justice

Self-righteous anger is convinced of inner self goodness and outer badness

Righteous anger has healed the inner split of good/bad and lives in love

Self-righteous anger minimizes, denies, rationalizes and excuses self-perpetration and sees self only as the victim in any situation and so never changes

Righteous anger faces the shame of seeing both the inner perpetration of the inner victim with understanding and mercy and changes

Self-righteous anger *feels* "sticky," smug, justified, superior and powerful and creates more inner shame and self-doubt

Righteous anger *feels* clear, right and loving

To live forgiveness, mercy, compassion, wisdom and love is not just gained by wanting it - it requires gut wrenching wrestling with these kinds of questions of ourselves. If we don't do it - we hate - ourselves and others. If we do the inner work, we will slowly start awakening to a capacity to see the nature of humanity - essentially spirit, and therefore good, caught in the physical realm and unaware of their true identity, living out of unawareness and fear resulting in great destruction.

Until you can see, understand and hold the suffering of both victim and perpetrator within, you cannot have any compassion, wisdom or justice for the rest of humanity.

I'm still thinking about Jenny's story about the man asking for soap. Before Charisse even prompted it, I was noticing that I wasn't feeling moved by that story, and it bothered me. And yet a couple of weeks ago, I sat on the phone with a friend of mine for an hour after she lost her cat, and I cried with her. Is that pointing to the fact that there's a lot of suffering in myself that I haven't opened myself to? (The fact that I can open myself to a more personal or "small" level of pain but not something so immense as that man's situation in S. Africa....?) I'm very troubled by this. On writing this right now, I'm realizing that it makes me feel like part of me is dead, being so numbed out.

This is another brave question. It takes that essential quality of humility to say, "I perceive I do not have compassion, cannot feel care, cannot put myself in another's shoes, and it bothers me!" This is an enlightened moment.

And then to notice the collapse into someone else's grief, which is an over-identification with loss of some part of ourselves represented by an animal. What does the animal represent - the instinct? Comfort? Something to meet your needs? How do you feel when some outer comfort is taken away from you that protects you from the deeper inner pain? Or what grief do you actually feel at the loss of some small and vulnerable, instinctual part of your being? I have no idea why there would be so much grief over the loss of an animal. It is interesting to me that you do not want a cat and are terrified thinking of getting one. Examine deeply your fears around this. I suspect that your tears with your friend over the loss of her cat is not a "small," level of pain.

Again, to realize this contrast is an enlightened moment. The question comes from paying attention - witnessing - and the question opens space for an answer.

So having noticed the dead, lack of inner response to a filthy and poverty struck human in front of you who has lost his dignity and is begging for a bar of soap might be an indication of an inner suffering that is too big and has been numbed out, repressed, dissociated and denied internally. So, ask yourself what does the dirty man asking for soap represent internally? What is the dynamic between yourself and a younger part that feels dirty and lost in shame that is begging for your attention and help? How do you refuse to notice this little one at your door knocking, and how do you keep the door shut? This, in and of itself, is a very good awareness to have, and you have actually given yourself the answer.

You will notice that I did not pay attention to the actual circumstances of the poor man begging for soap in considering your lack of emotional response - I paid attention to what part of the story is a trigger into defense internally. Look at the metaphor and the process and the dynamic.

If I asked you to have empathy for the feeling of actual dirt on your skin, you would immediately be able to say, "Oh yeah, I know that feeling - it's like when you go camping and the third day in cannot sleep because your skin feels sticky and itchy with grime and insect repellent and you cannot wait for a hot shower." You could most certainly have empathy at that level.

You had said at one point, "The more we deprive ourselves, the more entitled we feel, because we get mad at others for not meeting our needs. Is this sort of related to my pervasive and strong trigger about being single and having to do everything myself? I'm not even sure I'm clear on this question yet but it's been sticking with me for some reason.

This is an enormously complex question with many layers to the answer. Maybe an entry point in is to ask, "Why am I so angry at having to meet my own needs?" Why am I so angry that I have to worry about what everyone else needs and feels, but no-one cares about what I feel and need." Your anger is a memory of a dynamic that happened a long time ago. How were you emotionally deprived as a child? How did you have to accommodate and meet the needs of your parents? What was the bargain in meeting their emotional needs? Did, this keep you safe in some sense - was there a secondary gain of "getting help, in some way?"

What was the bargain with your parents?" Your anger at "their" side of the bargain not being met, is memory, displaced on to the "missing husband who should be there to meet your needs to help you." We can be very angry at not getting the secondary gain out of being used and abused. The inner dialogue can be something like, "I do all this for you and what do I get for it?" You see this all the time in marriages... you earn the money and repairs in the home and I will give you sex. I do not mean to be crass, but honestly this dynamic is more often the case than not in my 40 years of working with couples. There is no genuine depth of emotional intimacy or love, just a bargain and sex is the bargaining chip, which is a re-enactment of the original bargains parents had with children..... i.e. in some way you children meet my needs - that is the bargain for getting food and a roof over your head and help with practical things.

See if this line of questioning opens up new questions. This is just grabbing one thread of a big knotted ball of yarn to see if we can unravel one small piece.

In theory, deprivation together with something to "make up for the deprivation," leads to entitlement and is a central dynamic and process of the 2nd quadrant.

Again, very good awareness and attention to what "keeps sticking," with us.

You had asked the question: "How did you make someone else responsible for your misery this week? In trying to answer this for myself, I immediately feel shame at even asking the question. I resist looking at it because I always blamed myself for any unhappiness in the family system, and still blame myself for things. For example, I get intense shame when I'm asked "Are you married? You're so friendly, etc;

I'd think you'd have been snatched up by a guy by now." In other words, I always turn in and say "well what's wrong with me?" "What did I do wrong?" What's my projection about this?" But in that situation, I'm being perpetrated against - I should be pissed at the perpetrator, and not going into a shame spiral and blaming myself." So my question is, how do I take responsibility for my own happiness without an inappropriate sense of self-blame and shame?

Yes, you have answered your own question. You still blame yourself for being victimized as a child (the self, turned in on the self), and you still cannot look at how you are the perpetrator now, to yourself. And when we perpetrate against ourselves, it ends up hurting others too in displaced anger, displaced sympathy, projections and judgments that are acted out to one degree or another.

The question of, "What's wrong with me?" is a self-perpetration and accusation. It is an attack on yourself at the most essential level. It immediately evokes shame and avoidance. If the question is, "hmmmm ... why am I being judgmental? This is an indication of some deep pain I need to see and be with," then you will more easily gain access in and awareness of the deep dynamic of projection that is a fundamental process of humanity.

To ask “What is wrong with me?” stops all further enquiry in love. We must recognize which of our questions are accusations and attacks and which are deeply caring and seeking deeper awareness.

Until you can discern this difference you will hear the questions of others as accusations that there is “something wrong with you.” This is your projection of your own self-hatred. You cannot hear that *maybe* the question they are asking is seeking to understand, or an offer of empathy, or an affirmation of how they see you. Now your inner anger at your own judgment that there must be something wrong with you is displaced on to the person asking the question and acted out in one way or another that hurts them, whether that is just a coldness, or uncomfortableness or a distancing, or outright anger at them that is masked and hidden. Even if their question is a judgment and accusation, it cannot hurt unless it is your own inner judgment and accusation.