

I have come to the conclusion that it is resentment that causes most human stupidity

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My own life serves as an example. Growing up, I had a hard time with my father's perfectionism. More accurately, he raised me as he had been raised, always showing what more I could have done. I didn't get it, and was feeling very hurt that nothing I did was ever enough for him. I felt hopeless, and that feeling became infected by the idea that 'I'll never be good enough for him, he always moves the goalpost, it's no use trying. I give up.' At that point, I turned my life into a protest against him.

From that first moment of infection, an inner voice starts talking about how it'll never work, give up, he doesn't care about you, etc, etc. It turned into 'Let's hurt him. He wants you to succeed. Be a failure, let him down as often and as hard as possible. Get back at him.'

It was blind, unreasoning rage and resentment. Though outwardly I could seem calm, inside I was seething with anger. But here's the thing: it's taken me 50+ years to bring it to the surface. It was operating all along, but it took me this long to find out what I can now explain in a couple of paragraphs.

You see, any time I was doing something that was succeeding, something roared up in me that made it impossible to continue. I got nerves, panic attacks, or I just got derailed and could never get it right. But it worked underground; even if I wanted to stop it, I couldn't.

Here's how it worked: because I hated my father, then anything he liked was off limits for me. I couldn't go to university, and if I did, it had to be something less than respectable. Anything that would make him happy, I couldn't do.

So a large part of my life was dictated to me by the person I hated. Sounds stupid, right? It is. That's exactly why I say that resentment makes us stupid.

Some other examples I can think of: I was teaching in an alternative charter school and the topic of Pledge of Allegiance came up. There was a school regulation that a patriotic observance should be done. One teacher said "But the Republicans do that." Everyone immediately agreed that we couldn't do it, because the right wingers did that, and we were left wing. I thought, "That's dumb. Do we have to dislike everything they like?"

To be fair now, right wingers do the same thing. 'I can't be for helping the environment, because that's a leftie issue.' How many right wingers drive Priuses or Teslas?

Now, I know some of you are getting ready to rant against one side or the other here. Stay with me for a just bit more. One teacher I worked with said "I'm against everything President _____ stands for." I thought 'So he's dictating what you stand for?'

Meaning: if you have to be against everything someone says because you are so against them, you're letting them run your life. Once you opt into this 'against' philosophy, you're no longer independent. You can't make up your own mind, you can only choose what they don't like. You can't recognize any good qualities they have. You're not allowed to.

This results in stupidity, because each one of us has a piece of the puzzle, and we need all the pieces to make this world work. We're trying to play solitaire with half the deck of cards, and blaming the others because it's not working. If we can't see that, we will never experience peace.

Again, I speak from experience. I wasted large parts of my life just desperately trying to retaliate and not make my father happy. As a result, I couldn't do even the things I really wanted to. Every time one of my projects started to succeed, I self-sabotaged, even the ones I really wanted to do. What a waste.

I know better now, thanks to the teachings of the True Parents and some truly inspired therapists. Until I dug deep enough to get to the root of my pain, and dig out the infected resentment, I was helpless against my own rebellion. Now I have some years left to try and get it right.

So, I don't think, even as an educator myself, that education is the answer to all problems. Without dissolving resentment, we can't see clearly. Once it's gone, many things suddenly become obvious.