

THE
DAVIS FOUNDATION

FOR PROVIDING
EMOTIONAL COMFORT

Letter of August 9, 2006

Dear Reader,

A recent op-ed article in *The New York Times* by Joseph A. Kinney entitled “Our Veterans’ Missing Medals” described the bravery of a Marine who, when ambushed, “ordered his Humvee directly into an enemy machine-gun position, where his gunner destroyed the nest. He then advanced on a trench, where he exited his vehicle and scattered enemy fighters. After his ammunition was depleted, he twice picked up an enemy’s rifle and continued. By the time the smoke cleared, Lieutenant Chontosh had killed more than 20 insurgents and saved the lives of dozens in his platoon.”

This is one of many accounts of remarkable bravery shown by individuals who respond to danger courageously. How do they do it? And why doesn’t everybody?

Are these responses *true solutions* or *false solutions*? They contain elements of both. When surrounded by an ambushing enemy, foiling the trap by destroying them, as Lieutenant Chontosh did, is a true solution. But because doing so puts one in mortal danger, the resulting disequilibrium is too overwhelming to enter awareness. The mental apparatus creates a double pathway. In one arm the disequilibrium continues out of awareness while in the other arm a false solution occurs: in this instance, denial of the danger perhaps accompanied by a sense of invincibility. The false solution enables an individual to plunge into danger to fulfill the task.

When in extreme suddenly occurring danger anyone will generate a false solution. He may deny the danger. He may depersonalize, experiencing the situation as though he is watching it from afar, or from outside his own body, or as though it isn’t real. He may develop the delusion that he is impervious to danger, as the young George Washington did when he wrote a relative that it was thrilling to hear the bullets whiz by him during battle. Or a person may simply lose awareness (faint).

It is probable that all of Lieutenant Chontosh’s fellow soldiers experienced false solutions of one kind or another. And it is probable that all or many of them performed well, returning fire from whatever relatively protected positions were available. These actions were *partial solutions*, typical actions to delay disaster. But false and partial solutions alone won’t result in exceptional bravery. A hero stands out among his compatriots because he perceives a true solution.

Why didn’t all the soldiers perform as courageously as Lieutenant Chontosh? Why didn’t they perceive a true solution? Some of them may not have felt as physically capable as he did. And they may have looked to him as the leader to solve the problem. But the key difference is that they lacked his creativity. Often a true solution for a disequilibrium is not immediately apparent. One must form new associative links to attain it. This is the definition of creativity.



The Davis Foundation for
Providing Emotional Comfort
30 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 1125
Chicago, IL 60602

Tel: (312) 230-0114
Fax: (312) 230-0168
www.davis-foundation.org
info@davis-foundation.org

Mental static, that is, the persistence of unsolved disequilibations, tends to dominate awareness. It interferes with the emergence of new ideas. We know of many historical figures who have been creative despite being very troubled, but that is a topic for another time. In general, creativity thrives in a milieu in which unsolved disequilibations are at a minimum.

There are many different situations in which one might be a hero. Not all are dangerous and not all evoke false solutions. But they all require creativity. As your Inner Guide solves your disequilibations you will find yourself becoming ever more creative. In time, it is likely that you, too, will become a hero.

QUESTION: (another from Ken Barnes of Oakland, CA)

How can one know that an Inner Guide will never do anything that causes a serious problem?

ANSWER:

The theoretical answer: The only way to get an inner entity of any sort is to understand its definition and then wish for it. People who meditate wishing for a sense of peace develop an inner entity that provides peace. People who do self-hypnosis to stop smoking develop an inner entity whose purpose in existing is to help them stop smoking. People who wish for an Inner Guide get that. But they must understand its precise definition in order to create one. An Inner Guide is composed of three, and only three, things: the pathway of comfort, the wish to be helpful, and a sense of its own identity. It can't do anything harmful because its definition precludes that.

The phenomenological answer: At this point there are hundreds of individuals who have developed an Inner Guide. Virtually everyone who does self-hypnosis regularly experiences positive changes and no one has ever reported a significant problem.

I welcome your questions and comments, and will publish as many of them as possible. I look forward to hearing from you, either by post or at info@davis-foundation.org. If you would like to be anonymous, just let me know.

Cordially,

Judith M. Davis