

Does Fear of Contagion Make Us Intolerant and Compliant?

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › “Behavioral immune system” is a set instincts and acquired habits that help us avoid pathogens in the wild
- › Behavioral scientists and psychologists who studied fear of disease and contagion found that it makes us more inclined to punish those who don’t follow the official rules
- › During COVID, our natural “sense of disgust” was cynically used to manipulate our emotions and behavior
- › Some of the scientists engaged in social engineering may have been well-intended but it was none the less a very wrong thing to do
- › In the end, it’s on each of us to overcome our trauma and our fear — and to make the mysterious transformation from a wounded child to a warrior

This story is about fear, contagion, instincts, love, and compassion. It is also about the ultimate triumph of freedom over darkness.

The “Litmus Test” of 2020

We often wonder why in 2020, some people came under the spell of the establishment’s bad magic — and some saw right through it and rejected fear.

I believe that one of the reasons why some of us were able to see right through the terrorists while others became spellbound is because by 2020, the “rebels” have been

already “initiated” by life into knowing that succumbing to fear and trusting the abuser were costly – and the compliant had not yet been forced to acquire that knowledge. (For the record, I wrote my [first “pandemic” Substack](#) in April 2020 – and yes, at the time I was scared but I was more scared of being a coward.)

In other words, the difference was not about being “smart” vs. “stupid” but about being experienced and knowing the cost of submission. The chasm between the two reactions exposed a developmental difference, the state of the soul at the moment – much like the difference between a child who has acquired confidence through being forced to stand up to bullies – and a child who, so far, has been spared and who is yet to learn it.

Both groups have acted very much out of self-preservation – but the “rebels” weren’t spooked for long by the fear of contagion and were instead disgusted by the propaganda – while the people who complied were completely overtaken by the fear of dying.

And as we know, a lot of money and effort has been invested by the beneficiaries of mass panic in creating exactly that sensation. The manipulators temporarily managed to surgically puppeteer people’s ancient instincts and turn them into weapons of mass self-destruction.

Resisting the manipulators required sensory knowledge. Some people had it, and some people’s didn’t. The good news is that a lot of people are acquiring that sensory knowledge now. That really is the best part of the whole affair!

“Behavioral Immune System”

As it turns out, a number of scientists over the years have formally studied fear of contagion and the sense of disgust in humans – and the impact of those emotions on social behaviors. Sadly, it looks like some of that research went straight into the 2020 campaigns of manufacturing fear and engineering compliance.

The term “behavioral immune system” was coined by [Mark Schaller](#), a psychologist at the University of British Columbia. In 2012, he published a [paper](#) titled, “Danger, Disease,

and the Nature of Prejudice(s).” In that paper, he analyzed two kinds of threats and how they turn into social prejudice and discrimination: the threat of interpersonal violence and the threat of infectious disease.

“The inferred threat of interpersonal violence leads to a fear prejudice against members of coalitional outgroups. This prejudice (along with a set of cognitive consequences) emerges especially under conditions that connote vulnerability to interpersonal harm.”

“The inferred threat of infectious disease leads to a disgust prejudice against individuals whose morphological appearance or behavior deviates from normative standards. This prejudice emerges especially under conditions that connote vulnerability to infection.

*Together, these lines of research yield insights about **the origins of prejudices directed against many different categories of people (many of whom pose no real threat whatsoever [emphasis mine].***

So, what happens when wealthy profiteers with ulterior motives decide to push through a shady reform under the guise of a dangerous pandemic – and put into motion a massive ongoing campaign to make everyone think about infection 24/7 and be perpetually scared? What happens is theft-enabling hysteria!

Back to Schaller. According to author [Kathleen McAuliffe](#), Mark Schaller “coined the term ‘behavioral immune system’ to describe thoughts and feelings that automatically spring to mind when we perceive ourselves to be at risk of infection, propelling us to act in ways that will limit our exposure.

Studies by Schaller and other researchers indicate that **people who chronically worry about disease are especially prone to antipathy toward those whose appearances diverge from the “normal” template, and these people have a harder time moving beyond that reaction [emphasis mine].**

“Compared to people not plagued by such health concerns, they are less likely to have friends who are disabled; by their own accounts, they are less inclined to travel abroad or engage in other activities that might bring them into contact with foreigners or exotic cuisines, they more frequently display negative feelings toward the elderly on tests of implicit attitudes ...”

Schaller did some interesting psychological experiments to see how the feeling of disgust in the context of communicable diseases influenced people's seemingly unrelated choices. In one of those experiments he showed two groups of Canadians different images (disease-related vs. general violence-related), and then asked them political questions.

In the first group, he “revolted subjects with a slide show of snotty noses, faces covered in measles spots, and other disease-related stimuli that previous research had demonstrated evoked near-universal disgust. The control group saw pictures depicting threats unrelated to infection – for example, electrocution or being run over by a car.”

“All the subjects were then asked to fill out a questionnaire that assessed their support for allocating government funds to help immigrants from Taiwan and Poland (groups whom they ranked as very familiar) ... versus immigrants from Mongolia and Peru (whom they rated as unfamiliar).

In comparison to the controls, the subjects who saw the germ-evoking photos showed a sharply elevated preference for familiar immigrant groups over lesser-known ones.”

“Schaller offered this interpretation of the findings: Over human history, exotic people have brought with them exotic germs, which tend to be especially virulent to local populations, so foreignness seems to trigger prejudice when we feel at greater risk of getting sick.

Also, it may be that lurking in the backs of our minds are concerns that the foreigner does not have as high standards of hygiene or that he doesn't follow culinary practices that reduce the risk of food-borne illness. Prejudice, Schaller

points out, is all about shunning others based on superficial impressions, so the sentiment, ugly as it is, is ideally suited for the purpose of shielding us from disease.”

That hypothesis can explain the illogical fear and strong negative sentiment against “vaccine refuseniks” felt by many proponents of COVID injections despite the fact that the injections did not stop infection or transmission (which was known right away – even though the narrative was “released” in phases).

Social engineers have manipulated disgust on purpose, and the illogical fear was there to confuse the senses, to push the establishment narrative, the societal reform, and the “product”!

“Disgustology”

Psychologist **Paul Rozin**, a Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, is considered to be the “father of disgust.” According to Kathleen McAuliffe, he theorized that “the emotion of disgust evolved to protect us from food poisoning and bitter toxins but is otherwise largely, if not entirely, determined by culture. He also designed clever and provocative experiments to explore people’s sense of contamination.”

“For example, he offered subjects items like fudge in the shape of a dog turd or orange juice in which a sterilized cockroach floated. His human guinea pigs were not keen to partake – evidence, he concluded, that our views about contamination are shaped by the notion that we might become what we eat or that an object’s essence can be imparted to anything that touches it.”

Val Curtis, a Scientist and a Hygiene Missionary

Val Curtis was a British scientist, a passionate hygiene proponent and the Director of the Environmental Health Group at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. Unfortunately, she passed away in October 2020.

Her work poses a number of philosophical questions because it seems like in her social engineering efforts, she meant well and sincerely believed that indigenous people in Africa needed her input and parental care in the form of changing their lifestyle habits to what she considered good. A philosophical question, however: Was she correct in her assumptions? Did she understand the culture and the reasoning of the people she “educated”?

How did she know that her knowledge was superior to theirs? And what’s that thing that compels us to go out of our way and disrupt other people’s habits while they are minding their business?

In 2020, continuing her public health mission, as a member of the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Behaviours and a contributor to SAGE, she advised the UK government on how to “encourage people to adhere to recommendations.” I find the social engineering ambition tragic but she is in the other world now, and she was probably a complex human being, so may she rest in peace.

In the video below, she talked about how objects controlled our behavior and about social engineering (“settings disruption” and “social deviance control”). This video is really interesting if you want to understand what we have been through in the past two years. And again, the philosophical question is, what if the managerial social engineer is well-intended but completely off in his understanding of reality? What then?

Interestingly, according to Kathleen McAuliffe, she found that “the people who are the most repulsed by perceived unhygienic behavior scored higher than average on a test of orientation toward punishment – that is, they are the most likely to endorse throwing criminals into jail and imposing stiff penalties on those who break society’s rules.”

Moral Psychology

Another scientist by the name of [David Pizarro](#), who teaches at Cornell University, has studied the correlation between disgust and moral and political outlooks. He has found

that people who were more easily prone to feeling disgusted tended to be more politically conservative (in the pre-COVID definition, which is different from today's).

But even more interestingly, he found that temporarily grossing people out by exposing them to a foul odor or an unappealing image – or even just asking them to fill out the questionnaire next to a sign reminding them to wash their hands – strongly tilted their answers toward more rule-based political, moral, and sexual values.

Kathleen McAuliffe notes: “Troublesome, a study of people serving as mock jurors found that those highly prone to disgust were more inclined to judge ambiguous evidence as proof of criminal wrongdoing, to impose stiffer sentences, and to see the suspect as wicked. Compared to their less easily revolted counterparts, they were also more prone to harboring an exaggerated sense of the prevalence of crime in their own neighborhoods.

A related study whose participants included law students, police cadets, and forensic experts similarly showed that disgust sensitivity correlated with a tendency to judge crime more severely and punish the perpetrators with longer sentences – and this association held up even for veteran forensic experts who were accustomed to seeing gruesome evidence.”

Disgust as Weapon

As we see, the feeling of disgust is a strong motivator. And that is exactly the feeling they have been trying to evoke in us regarding biohazards, formally known as our felling human beings.

Using Instincts to Engineer Compliance

They say we can't judge another person without walking a mile in that person's shoes. Very true! As much as we flatter ourselves proclaiming that we are strictly rational beings, our actions are really determined by our feelings – and our feelings in each moment are determined by the experiences we've gone through, especially as children,

and how we've processed them — and a myriad of adjacent and overlapping factors, such as, for example, the complicated dance of chemical, sonic, electrical, magnetic, and other signals generated by our own cells as well as our microbiome.

We clothe all this mysterious electricity in “ideas” but it's really a sea of feelings! We act according to our sensory condition — and then, as “rational” people, we explain away our choices with logical structures. The reason I am bringing it up because since 2020, we've been under an intensive campaign designed to confuse our senses, attack us with fear, trigger our so called “behavioral immune system” and turn it against all reason or logic.

And Here Comes in the Kindness

Over the course of my life, I have come to believe that a good strategy is to keep our eyes on our protection — without panic — and on healing, and not to spend too much energy on judging others, especially if they are sincere but slow to figure things out. Why? Because we are all learners. We are all imperfect (I know I am).

And despite the zigzags, by design, all of us — perhaps with the exception of those born for predation — are on the way to honor our courage, whether it takes a short time or a long time, whether we learn through intuitive wisdom or through despair.

Focusing on protection and healing honors the Creator (regardless of how we commune with the sacred) and leaves no room for emotional toxins (that have a habit of “hopping hosts” and “changing topics” without changing their poisonous impact — which is why it is critical to stay even-headed, have faith in the meaning of the bigger picture, and keep our eyes on our ultimate destination, which is dignity and healing).

When the Establishment Is Just Like an Abusive Spouse

In my case, I learned the price of not standing up to bullies when my abusive marriage suddenly turned surreal and dangerous. The adventure was so crazy and dramatic that the lesson stuck with me forever, and so when in March 2020, the proverbial television

started using language similar to the language of my abusive ex-husband, I just couldn't trust it.

Having once been in denial, and having snapped out of denial only when I had to, I've learned to not judge but instead, focus on the practical tasks of protecting myself and doing what I can to encourage healing.

So, when I look at mad lockdowners of today, I see my — yes, troubled, yes, dangerously agitated and sometimes annoying, but none the less — brothers and sisters who can use a pure-hearted prayer for healing in addition to whatever experience life may provide to them to restore their spiritual compass.

Predators

As far as the Schwabs and the Rockefellers, they are predators with an existential function of awakening us from slumber. They are so obnoxious because we are not all bonding together quite yet but instead, fighting with each other, reacting to our fears.

I believe that they are walking their own existential journey that fits into the big picture and spans lifetimes — but unlike their policies and actions, their existential journey is not of big interest to me at this moment. Their current military operation against the people is enough to think about.

Overcoming All Fear

We come from all walks of life, from different ancestries and different backgrounds. We may or may not admit to it but at some point we've all been damaged, and some of us healed, and some are still hurting. And we've all felt fear.

It is my passionate belief that there is a big difference between being alert and freaking out. In today's environment, it is easy to get scared — being it of synthetic biology pathogens or of the Fourth Industrial Revolution — but getting scared is exactly what we need to avoid.

Yes, we all occasionally feel fear – but the qualitative difference is in how we react to it, and how we act toward our sincere peers who trigger our fear. Personally, I have found that only love and help from the spiritual forces give us the power to remain cool-headed in the face of feeling threatened. It is that moment when a wounded child becomes a warrior – and then miracles happen.

About the Author

To find more of Tessa Lena's work, be sure to check out her bio, [Tessa Fights Robots](#).