

# “Emotional Dwarfism” Is a Failure to Thrive Emotionally—Whence the Childhood Roots of Hate, Psychosis, Violence, and Nucleargeddon—All Curable

Bob Johnson

VIOLENCE IS NOT ONLY WRONG, IT’S DISEASED—it’s always painful and too often fatal—as with Martin Luther King, no less. When emotions run high, doctors have difficulty making progress—calm, dispassionate review of the obvious evidence is vital, if you aim for less pain and fewer deaths. This paper is based on the self-evident precept that violated children unmistakably predate violent adults. The remedy, highlighted here, is unusual in all psychiatry, in that it is backed by solid, **irrefutable, objective, scientific evidence**—from brain scans, no less—at least it is, for those willing to look.

The paper has 6 parts: 1. Introduction; 2. Un-memorising Terror; 3. Nutritious Emotions; 4. Tyrannical Revenge; 5. The Way to Cure Nucleargeddon Is Paved With Good Intentions; 6. Conclusion.

Parenting is a troubled skill, largely because mis-parenting perpetuates itself. As the poet Philip Larkin says of parents—“*they fill you with the faults they had, and add some extra just for you*”. Larkin moderates his criticism with “*they may not mean to, but they do*”. Sadly his “solution”—“*don’t have any kids yourself*” can extinguish the human race as reliably as ever revengeful Emotional Dwarfism will.

*Keywords:* emotional infantilisms, Hitler’s blindspot, Hitler’s internal, memorised monster, curing violence, curing hate, curing psychoses, ways to escape our thermonuclear Armageddon

## 1. Introduction

VIOLENCE FRIGHTENS YOU—that’s what it’s for. If it doesn’t, then your aggressor will raise the threat level, until it does. Fear is inescapable. It is the only consistent feature in one and all violence, from playground bullies up to and including Thermonuclear Armageddon—unless you terrify your victim, then there’s no point in wasting your energies harming them in the first place. Though quite what benefit you hope to gain from reducing your fellow humans to witless terror, is as unclear as is where your diseased motivation comes from in the first place.

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Violence is not because we're jungle animals, nor because our reptilian brains get the better of us—no, it's deliberate, badly thought-through policy—based on the flawed belief that the way to solve our emotional pains is to hurt or break other people. How inflicting more distress can ease yours, is never explained—it's just taken for granted that spreading pain and destruction is “good”, and thinking things through, less so. However, for a species which deploys conscious thought to enable it to survive, this non-thinking paves the way to self-extinction.

Is there no hope? Can we re-think? If we can send people to the moon and back, why can't we sort out our yen for destroying each other? It's all very well chuntering on about hate, and how we should all love one another—while all the time, we don't really believe it, or not enough of us do. So how can yet another academic paper help? What can it offer that might make a difference? Well, the best way to understand violence, is to talk to people who do nothing else. Find out what makes them tick. Explore their thinking patterns. Unpack their hidden fears, and offer them a way through, a way of looking at the world and our fellow creatures that eases the gloom, perhaps even adding a glimmer of delight.

But why should they believe you? It is our standard prison policy to shut violent people away, in closed, harsh punitive buildings, which rarely see the light of day. In fact, to put the matter bluntly, we, as a society, have decided to inflict harm, on those who harm us. It's not a question of shoot first, and ask questions later—why bother asking questions at all? So non-thinking starts here. And it's understandable. Violent people are dangerous. They could kill you, if you get too close. Lock them up and throw away the key. What this does is put the whole disease of violence into an emotional blindspot, into a non-thinking zone, which is actually where it comes from in the first place.

But blocking painful issues off, is a recipe for disaster. Plunging your head into the sand, rules out any possibility of rescue. And violence is now a global disease, which if we don't remedy soon, could end everyone. And the way to cure a pandemic is to study it closely, to find where it comes from, and put that right. It's hazardous. If you wanted to treat Ebola, you wouldn't get anywhere by keeping a safe distance from it. Take precautions by all means, but if you're not prepared to eyeball it, face to face, then it will remain just another of those inevitable disasters which befall us, incomprehensibly, out of the blue.

So it is with violence. Through circumstances which are unlikely to repeat, I found myself working for five years with the most violent, unstable, lifers in the entire UK prison system. I didn't go there empty handed, nor because I had any notion of what violence was really all about. What I did know, is that childhoods matter—if you want to understand why the person in front of you isn't thinking straight, then you need to look at how their thinking first started, where its foundation stones were originally laid, i.e. in infancy. Parenting footprints. That's the key. And as I found irrefutably with violence—inside every bully is a coward. From which it follows, as day does night—rinse away the cowardice, and the bullying evaporates. Fear not only cripples the victim, but has already hamstrung the aggressor.

Violence cuts both ways. Reducing its victim to a subservient heap might seem to be its obvious aim—but hidden behind, is a potent fear—one which curdles the perpetrator's mind, long before he or she strikes the first blow. If homo sapiens were more sapient, we would question why inflicting extra pain on others, could possibly ease our own. Spilling others' blood solves nothing—a primal, essentially infantile, (and quasi-psychotic,) delusion.

This paper argues that the obvious mindlessness of violence can only ever occur, because it is powered by a deeper blocked thinking inside the aggressor. Curiously enough, the more deeply you penetrate into the

developing human mind, the clearer it becomes that all subsequent violence comes from an irrefutable earlier violation—the more gruesome the wounding in childhood, the more fearsome the destruction, and the more opaque the blockage.

The obstacles however, are huge. Violence is so commonplace, it is seriously hard to think it could have an elementary root cause. But just imagine—if straightening out thinking could eliminate violence, what a breakthrough that would be. This paper traces a pathway from earliest infancy, through kindergarten troubles, up to serial killings, and back again—it is essentially a simple thread, but difficult to envisage, because we are so used to violence—it’s ubiquitous. And violence certainly commands our attention, and is therefore highly marketable—at huge social and political cost. Hollywood first, followed later by social media—both thrive financially on precisely this human susceptibility, thereby befuddling its cure.

Violated children rampage into violent adults—they are taught in infancy that injuring people is the best and only successful way to proceed through life. No surprise then, that they go on to damage their wives, husbands, children or everyone else, as a matter of course. More surprising is that NOT hitting children, breeds non-violent adults. And to crown it all, willing (but previously violent) adults can yet be untaught violence, 100%.

Thermonuclear weaponry combines with Armageddon to give you Nucleageddon. As a matter of deliberate policy, and at unsustainable cost, we fully intend to suffocate our beautiful blue planet in a longstanding cloud of lethal radioactivity, against which no living thing, including both ourselves and our very own progeny, can survive. Now that’s what I call Emotional Dwarfism.

## 2. Un-memorising Terror

I don’t know what you’d expect if you went into a roomful of murderers. When I did, in May 1991, I was struck by how similar they were to everyone else. Quite the opposite to what Hollywood, James Bond or Agatha Christie might have lead you to believe. More depressed, obviously, with no lightness or future about them—but essentially no different from the thousands of family practice medical patients I had been treating for the preceding twenty years. Or going back a further 30 years in my medical career, they closely resembled the benighted inhabitants of the long-stay psychiatric wards in the old Victorian Lunatic Asylum where I worked in my first full-time psychiatric training, in 1963. Shuffling zombies would describe them best. Why show any interest, if tomorrow was guaranteed by government policy, to be just as dull as today, indeed no different from all your yesterdays.

I had known the then prison governor, John Marriott, for a number of years. His wife had trained at University with mine—we visited each other as family friends. He was exceptionally proud, justifiably, to have been appointed the youngest governor to the UK’s then flagship prison—and he was showing off his status by parading me before his several clients, both staff and prisoners. I knew nothing about prisons, but I was keen to explore how childhood damage could curdle your thinking—and here, it seemed, was a golden opportunity to do so—what worked in a maximum security prison wing, if it did, would work anywhere.

So I was scouting around this prison wing, to see how I might fit in, what obstacles there might be to frustrate my ambition, and what the likelihood was that I’d succeed. But this was not a one-way process. I too was being scrutinised. For on my second visit to that prison wing, an event occurred which was quite extraordinary—few others in my entire life, match it for speed, precision, or penetrating observation. On that later occasion, my wife came too—her understanding and consent being indispensable to the radical change I

was proposing in our life. So there she was, standing at the end of the line of dignitaries on our official inspection, being rather overlooked by them. Suddenly, out of the blue, an energetic prisoner bounced down the central metal staircase, strode past us all, stopped in front of my wife, and asked her earnestly—“will you let him come?”

We call him the prisoner in the blue jumper—and what he displayed here was remarkable. First he had noted from my demeanour, and the few questions I’d asked the previous day, that I had something he wanted—a different way of looking at things. Then he showed an unusual insight into how families worked—his possible future access to whatever I had to offer would not have come his way, had my wife opposed it. I didn’t tell him this. No one did. He came to this conclusion himself, and in an astonishingly short time. He didn’t ask me—he asked her. Please bear in mind the inhabitants of this prison wing were labelled “psychopaths”, incurable, incapable of empathy, cold-blooded killers—yet here was one of them demonstrating, with split second accuracy, an insight into human beings that would be a credit to many, if not most of us.

Don’t make the mistake of minimising this flash of humanity. For me, it was like being shown round an abandoned tumbledown tropical greenhouse, and finding among the dust and the cobwebs, a rare and beautiful orchid. Prescient, to say the least. It’s easy to dismiss—to say that he didn’t really understand, didn’t appreciate the finer points of human relationships. But if you think about it, even briefly, something was ticking in the man in the blue jumper which needed fostering, cherishing, and encouraging to breathe, and so to grow. It also showed that the seeds were already there, they just needed optimum nurturing conditions to blossom.

So if you really look at murderers in a dispassionate, essentially clinical way, you see things which are unexpected, which conventional wisdom, and the bulk of forensic psychiatry says are impossible, even unwelcome. But the truth is otherwise. I sat unaccompanied for some 2,000 hours, with 50 of them over those five years, even videoing around 700 hours—and inside every murderer was a crippled infant, trying to get out. You might not believe this. The Government Minister in charge certainly did not. Indeed most of the prisoners were convinced to the contrary, some remaining so throughout. But enough changed, to convince me, and to provide a thread that is clear, is obvious, and is so heart-warming that it won’t let me rest.

Take another remarkable phenomenon that occurred increasingly often. It confirms the central thesis of this paper. As more and more of the prisoners trusted me with their innermost fears, an astonishing similarity of behaviour appeared. As they discussed their earliest fears, their heads would tilt back, they would look up at the ceiling, as if they were looking at a person 20 feet (6 meters) tall. This certainly didn’t happen to begin with—they needed to get to know me really well—in an important sense, I had to be on their side looking at a common fearsome enemy. And the gap between us was not easy to bridge—I, a doctor, eager to learn how I could help them—they, bedraggled members of a society which had locked them away for life, on account of their horrendous past behaviour.

But after a while, it was obvious that their emotional life was haunted by figments of gigantic size, who could crush them any minute—thereby faithfully echoing the childhoods they had failed to escape from. These figments were four or five times bigger than they were, just as their parents had been, all those years before. Yet they were still there. Dogging their every step, ruining their future, just as they had devastated their past. Parenting footprints had left deep, and damaging emotional scars. They had frozen them into being forever small. My task, as in this paper, was to persuade them of a deeper truth, and wider reality—they had grown up in size, but not in emotional stature. Dwarfed in emotions, they had become dangerously potent in full sized adult bodies.

Let's leave dungeons, and go back into school rooms. Here we submit our offspring to 12 or more years of indoctrination—we call it “education”, and when we're feeling wise, we insist that every child receives the benefit, for free. What are we teaching? Well traditionally we teach the three-R's, “reading, writing and arithmetic”—and so we should. We are also teaching them how to behave—or more accurately, how to socialise, how to have fun, how to delight in cheerful friendly relationships, so as to cope better with the vicissitudes that afflict us all, in adult life.

That's the good side. The obvious benefits. But some we also teach to be terrified. We may not realize it at the time, but it all goes in, and along with two plus two equals four, we learn that powerful important people are terrifying. You don't talk about this. You don't even think about it. It's far too dangerous even to begin. Yet there it is, buried far from the light of day—if you venture too far from what has been prescribed, an unknowable blackhole will open, and swallow you up, without trace—thrown there by a shadowy (and long obsolete) figment more than twice your size. You don't know where the terror comes from, you can't even see it very clearly—so targeting it with rational thought is next to impossible. Hence, when you discuss your dangerous parental figments, you look up—they are still 5 times bigger than you—at least they are, until you can be persuaded to look again.

As a five-year-old, there is no logical or obvious reason why writing  $2 + 2 = 4$  is “right” and gets you good marks from the all-knowing teacher, whereas writing  $2 + 2 = 5$ , doesn't. It's all a blur. As a toddler, things happen to you, rather than the other way around. You fall over, it hurts—you are either picked up and comforted, or you are sneered at. Whichever outcome occurs, is entirely out of your hands. You'd prefer the first, obviously—but being so small, and so wobbly, there's nothing you can do about it. Think back to yourself at that age, and ponder the discrepancy in power, size and the potential to be done harm to.

Early infancy is all about memorising—astonishing quantities of information flood in from every quarter. Arithmetic is the most obvious, but language is bigger. Words make no sense when you're first born, how could they? But people keep using them all the time, to you, even at you, and among themselves. Constant exposure, or as we now say, total immersion, gradually fills the verbal void we are all born with.

Sometimes, regrettably, words are not merely spoken, they are shouted, not only to the generality, but specifically at you. Enormous emotions thrash about, generally without any obvious reason. You didn't know that putting your fingers into electric sockets, or waving loaded guns, was a “bad” idea. But excess emotion, or even panic in those gigantic people around, cannot avoid impacting your growing mind. Often it's just as well it does, those large people around you have seen it all before—they know—your task is to learn, to memorise what is safest on this generally dangerous planet.

But look now at where it goes wrong. That's the key to mayhem. Suppose for argument's sake you did learn that  $2 + 2 = 5$ . Your primary school teacher failed to get the right message across—perhaps she or he had similar thought blockages, who knows? But there you are, for the rest of your life—things don't add up right, they never seem fully to make sense. You add two buns to two cakes, and you expect to get five in all. This is not my personal hunch, my religious predilection, my naïve idealism seeping out—no, this is the real world, and if you want to get by, then it makes sense to be as realistic as you can. Nothing is ever 100%, but there are elementary ways of going about things, one of which is primary mathematics, so if you never really got the hang of how two objects added to two items do really make four, not five, then your handicap would be obvious—correcting it would be straightforward to everyone else, though obviously not to you, else you'd

correct it. Just as you would yourself with all the other mis-memorised items, if you were ever given enough emotional support to do so in later life.

So this is how we get hold of the wrong end of the stick—how we misinterpret just what works best in this challenging world.  $2 + 2$  does not equal 5—not if you want to give yourself the best chance of surviving. Yet here we had grown men looking up at perceptions of people 6 meters (20 feet) tall. No human being ever grows to that threatening height—they can’t. If they did, not only would they incur innumerable medical problems for a start (think giraffe physiology), but above all, they’d be absolutely terrifying to you, whoever you were—and you’d reach for all sorts of violence to defeat them—as all violent people do.

But, you might say, surely it can’t be as simple as that? Everytime you added things up and got them wrong, surely you’d learn. Every time you looked at human beings, you’d see they were normal sized. For the first, you’d change the way you calculated, the way you thought things through. This is elementary mathematics. For the second—a moment’s thought would make it impossible to continue to believe that people could even exist at such an outrageous size, let alone haunt you. No one else would agree that humans can be so enormous—so why does this persist?

Well, of course, many of the things we mis-learn in infancy, we re-learn as we mature. Many of our parent’s prejudices can fade, with time and happier circumstances. But, and here’s the key to all mental misapprehensions—some terrors bite so deep they turn off your ability to look again—once-bitten-twice-shy in spades.

I call this the Bessel-Block. It underlies all hate, all irrationality, all violence, all crime, and indeed Nucleargeddon. It comes from work by Dr Bessel van der Kolk. In 1995, he played trauma tapes to people in a brainscan machine, and to his surprise and my delight, he found that **trauma blocks your frontal lobes and speech centre**. Deep trauma induces a “stroke” which disables all thought and speech about it, 100%. You cannot think or talk about this type of severe trauma—not without a specially adapted talk therapy—such as “Verbal Physiotherapy” (see Johnson, 2018).

Again this is not my personal whim—Bessel-Blockage has been proved SCIENTIFICALLY and OBJECTIVELY (van der Kolk, 1996). So, to any and all who care to look, there’s no escaping the clinical fact that memorised terror can all too readily persist, essentially undetected. It does so for the elementary and easily provable point that severe trauma prevents you even thinking about it, let alone verbalising or visualising it.

Happily there is equally powerful evidence that special understanding, and specialised input can enable it to be un-memorised. For a start on that prison wing between 1991 and 1996, the number of alarm bells rung, fell from 20 a year to zero, for the last three—a unique and verifiable record, for maximum security prisons worldwide. So let’s now look more deeply at where it comes from in the first place. Until we know that, we can’t even begin to cure it.

### 3. Nutritious Emotions

Once upon a time—long, long ago—if you set out on a sea journey, far from land, for months on end, your teeth would first bleed and then drop out. No one knew why. It came out of the blue, with no obvious explanation. Even the strongest and bravest would succumb, some even dying of it. Long-distance mariners called it scurvy. Perhaps it was too much salt water. Or could it be that humans just weren’t built for exploring so far afield. It never happened to timid folk, who patiently tended their crops, like they were expected to. Microscopes hadn’t been invented then, and chemistry was still in the grip of alchemy—so not much help there

either. But it doesn't happen nowadays—even going to the moon, your teeth are safe. What's the difference? Everyone now knows the answer—vitamins. Small simple invisible molecules, present in abundance in fresh fruit and vegetables—but entirely absent from salted meat and dry ships biscuits.

The parallel with violence is unmistakable. Vastly more people die of it than ever did from scurvy, and it cripples both weak and strong. And, just as was the case earlier with scurvy, the reasons commonly given as to where it comes from are legion, depressing and ineffective. Yet right under our noses is the cure—of course, it goes against all convention, it contradicts so much conventional wisdom, it can easily be dismissed as laughable, ignorance, naïvety or simply wrong. But, as with vitamin C, the remedy is available in abundance, if only you knew where to look.

How was the curse of scurvy eventually lifted? Well, doughty sea-goers were finally cajoled into eating, of all things, lemons, or limes—whence “Limeys”. Even Robert Louis Stevenson took care to have a large, man-sized apple barrel on board for his epic voyage to Treasure Island. But you may be sure that many opiated sailors dismissed such bizarre notions as dangerous poppycock, even witchcraft—how could a really bloody disease come from something that wasn't there? You bleed when you are wounded—everyone knows that. Things are done to you that make you ill—yet here was a disease which came from something that didn't happen, something was missing—a deficiency disease. It's hard to get your mind around it—but that didn't stop it killing too many.

So if you wanted to cure scurvy, you had to do something everyone else thought was lunatic—what could lemons possibly have to do with excess bleeding? So it is with violence, and all the other dread human “thinking” diseases—if you want to cure them (and who doesn't?), then you have to look somewhere else, you have to upend conventions. You have to look for the missing ingredient. Why? Well, because everything else we've tried so far is not only a dismal failure, it even threatens our entire future on this wonderful planet—and that cannot be recommended, at least not by a thinking-species.

So far we've tried to cure violence, by applying even more of it. To stop you hitting me, I set out to hit you even harder. You might shoot me, so I'll be quicker on the draw, and fire first. This hasn't remedied violence—on the contrary, it guarantees to increase it. It simply doesn't work. Never has, and never will. Even ancient wisdom discounts it—those who live by the sword, die by the sword. So the escape you are offered from a lethal threat, is likely to kill you too—not exactly 100% rational. To prevent obliteration of our way of life on this extraordinary planet, we plan to launch enough thermonuclear missiles to obliterate us all, anyway. Hardly homo sapiens at our best.

It just doesn't make any sense at all, not once you think about it. And that's the operative word—“think”. Because the strict medical fact, as per Bessel-Blockages (see above), is that violence and violations stop you thinking in the first place, so further punitive “treatments” are likely to do the same, only more so. If violence comes from non-thinking, adding further harm is guaranteed to decrease thought even more—reigniting cognition requires something altogether other.

So where's the vitamin C for violence? Where's something that is cheap, abundant, and even delicious? It's obvious, but blocked. It's irrefutable, but too simple to be believed. It's assumed not to work, even before we begin—but it all hangs together with a neatness which is breathtaking, once you permit yourself to venture beyond an almost universal prejudice.

Violent children degrade into violent adults—befriended, cherished children don't. Can you doubt that? Doesn't that make eminent sense? Terror is more easily memorized than  $2 + 2 = 4$ . It goes in, and it stays in.

How about weaning it out? How about reversing Bessel-Blockages by persuasion, by cajoling, by cherishing. Whoops, there’s that naïvety coming out again. There’s that idealism blurring your vision. Who could possibly suppose that approaching dangerous people as if they mattered, as if they were really sociable underneath, how could this help? Well, not many allow themselves to do this, that’s for sure. However, if you were to spend up to 2,000 hours, talking to dangerous men about disturbing emotions, then you too would find something quite remarkable, quite contrary to conventional wisdom, and, in a word, quite curative.

So how does vitamin C work? Well, medically speaking, it disrupts the connective tissue. That is to say those bodily tissues which hold everything else together, the gums, the lining of the joints, the tissues around blood vessels—all need vitamin C to work properly. Without it, these connections lose their elasticity—they fail to hold things together. And so you first bleed, fall apart, and then die.

What is the equivalent in terms of behaviour? Are there circumstances where a similar lack of connection, disrupts normal health? Are there indications that without a similar vital ingredient, illhealth arrives? Well, yes—there’s a well-known paediatric condition known as “failure to thrive”, or alternatively “psychosocial dwarfism”. And the missing ingredient? Warm emotions.

Well how diffuse can you get? What on earth are emotions, let alone warm ones? Scientifically speaking, they’re a no-no (see Note below). You can’t weigh them, you can’t measure them, you even have the utmost difficulty in defining them—just like Vitamin C was back then. But they are real enough. And their deficit is all too easily demonstrated.

Indeed where behaviour falls apart, you need to look for what’s missing. Suppose, as a doctor, you came across “unusual eating and drinking behavior... such as eating from a garbage can and drinking from a toilet bowl, stealing food, alleged picky eating and rejecting food at the table, polydipsia and polyphagia, possibly alternating with gorging and vomiting and with self-starvation” (Rogol, 2020). It sounds awful. It is awful. But it happens. And the remedy is universally accepted in paediatric circles. All this paper does is extend what’s already well known there, to all other “thinking” diseases, including Nucleargeddon, violence, psychosis and hate.

#### 4. Tyrannical Revenge

CHILDHOODS MATTER. The central problem of philosophy is the paucity of hard facts. And the problem with “facts” (see Johnson 2011 and later), is that none of them can ever be 100% hard. This allows philosophers and others to hide behind discrepancies, while the rest of us flounder. But some facts are harder than others, and one of the hardest is the fact that the human eye has a retinal blindspot (see below). This is not a question of subjective opinion, or scientific scepticism, it is a fact of human life—you can acknowledge it, or ignore it, as you wish—but if you strive to be real, then it’s inescapable. No one can see what falls in their own blind spot. Equally reliable, and quite as solid, are Bessel-Blockages. Just as simple objective tests prove you cannot see the cross or the circle in the diagram below—so simple objective brainscans prove the invisibility inherent in Bessel-Blocks. It doesn’t matter who you are, how clever you are, or how experienced—you can never see in your own retinal blindspot. Emotional blindspots are just as impervious—just as blind.

And CHILDHOODS MATTER precisely because that’s where the densest emotional blindspots arise. You can argue till you’re blue in the face that no human ever grows to 6 meters (20 feet) tall, but you are wasting your energies, if this “fact” falls within that person’s blindspot. There are ways around it—but force, coercion or violence only make matters worse.



And of course, it would be an entirely different world if there really were such gigantic monstrosities around every corner. You, yourself are unlikely to grow much above 6 feet (2 meters), so there's no match if your enemy is already three times bigger. Any contest you had with such an adversary would already be lost. Even someone double your size could pick you up and throw you away, whenever they felt like it. And that's precisely why CHILDHOODS MATTER, since that is exactly what happens in far too many childhoods, where adults are invariably 3, 4 or 5 times bigger than you were, at the time.

And the central human tragedy, as this paper argues, is that a remarkably large number of adults spend their entire life cowering before 20 feet (6 meters) tall people who they “know” are there, but can neither fully see, nor therefore rid themselves of—because they fall succinctly within their very own blindspot. Indeed the size of these demons is precisely what triggers those blindspots in the first place. It comes from what is perhaps the hardest, most solid fact of them all—children are born small, and some remain small in their own minds, ever after. It's a self-perpetuating disease, and it may end us all.

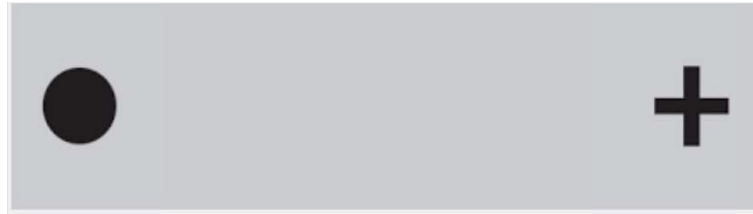
If your enormous carer treats you as an important addition to the human race, when you first arrive with us—then as you grow, you will adjust your size relative to theirs, without difficulty. On the other hand, if they terrify you, thereby entailing Bessel-Blockages, you will remain small relative to quasi-invisible figments for the rest of your life. How could it be otherwise, if you cannot see past your emotional blindspot?

Given such dire scenarios, how can I remain cheerful? Well, the answer lies in the nutritious nature of warm emotions. I know, and it stands to reason, that people like being friendly (when it's safe). They like socialising—indeed that way lies delight. People are fascinating. They are only violent, psychotic, or hateful because they see you as 20 feet (6 meters) tall and feel the need, the unnecessary need, to take you down before you crush them under foot. It sounds bad, it often is bad, it recurs as often as there are neglected or unwanted (and invariably very small) infants. But it is eminently curable, as curable as scurvy, and with an even more abundant remedy readily available, to hand. You can talk someone out of their blindspot. If you can persuade them to trust you—then you can join in their delight, and welcome them as a blossoming addition to the human race, which they were some years before (when born).

Time to prove just how blind these visual handicaps can be. Bear in mind what you cannot see in your retinal blindspot, mirrors exactly what you cannot see in your emotional blindspot. And of course, if you cannot see, but are fundamentally terrified, then your fear will know no limits—it can take any shape or form you fear, especially those offered to you by your local demagogue or social media. Neighbours, “them”, foreigners, other skin-colours or genders—the list is rather too voluminous for comfort—you name it, someone will fear it, and likely resort to violence to combat it. No wonder violence is entrenched and ubiquitous.

So here's that blindspot again. Every human eye has one. It's where the optic nerve leaves the retina, which it needs to do to take vital information from there, to the rest of the brain. The challenge is to undergo the following physical experiment for yourself. As you do so, bear in mind that emotional blindspots are just as opaque, but unlike retinal ones, are also 100% curable.

1. Close your left eye.
2. Stare at the circle in the following diagram.
3. Move closer to the screen or page, then further away.
4. Keep doing this until the plus sign disappears.
5. When it disappears, you have found your right eye's blind spot.



Repeat using your other eye, until you are convinced that there is more to this curious world of ours, than generally meets the eye.

So to the worst horror of the last century—Adolf Hitler. Alice Miller (Miller, 1981) talks with exquisite and unprecedented clarity about how the emotional atmosphere in Hitler’s family home is faithfully reflected in the Germany he fashioned. She was the pioneer in unpacking this simple, but devastating root of our current dire world order. She too cannot resist quoting extensively from Hitler’s own verbal description of his childhood. Her lucidity is empowering. She showed a keen interest in my approach when I discussed it with her in the South of France. Here’s what Hitler had to say about his very own infancy. He starts (in the third person) aged 3. This is an unusually frank account given by a man of 26 looking back at his appalling upbringing. I have underlined points I’d highlight.

1. Here is an example: in a basement consisting of two stuffy rooms lives a laborer’s family of seven. Among the five children is a boy of three years. This is the age when a child first becomes conscious of things around him. Gifted people carry memories of that period far into old age.

2. The small, overcrowded space produces an unfortunate situation. The conditions often generate quarrels and bickering. The people are not living with one another; they are merely living in the same place, squeezed together. Every small argument leads to a sickening quarrel. In a larger dwelling, the argument would be easily smoothed out simply by separation. The children may tolerate these conditions because children can quarrel constantly and forget the argument quickly. However, a daily battle between parents slowly teaches the children a lesson. The dispute may take the form of a father’s brutality to a mother, of drunken maltreatment. Any person who does not know of this life can hardly imagine it. By the time the boy goes from three to six, he has developed a working idea of the world which must horrify even an adult. Now, he is morally infected and physically undernourished, and the young “citizen” is sent to primary school with vermin living in his poor little scalp.

3. Now, with great difficulty, he must learn reading and writing, and that is about all he can manage.

4. Studying at home is out of the question. Father and mother argue and use language that would not be socially appropriate right in front of their own children, making studying impossible. But when the parents talk to teachers and school officials, they are more inclined to talk roughly to them than to turn their young child over their knee and introduce him to reason. Nothing the little fellow hears at home strengthens his respect for his fellow human beings. [*Was der kleine Kerl sonst noch alles zu Hause hört, führt auch nicht zu einer Stärkung der Achtung vor der lieben Mitwelt.*]

5. They never utter a good word about humanity. No institution is safe from their profane attacks, from the school teacher to the head of the state. No matter whether it is religion or morals, state or society, everything is defamed and dragged in the muck. When the boy leaves school at the age of fourteen, it is hard to tell which is greater—his incredible stupidity where common knowledge and basic skills are concerned, or his biting disrespect and bad manners.

6. The immoral displays, even at that age, make one's hair stand on end. [Aufretens verbunden mit einer Unmoral schon in diesem Alter, daß einem die Haare zu Berge stehen könnten.]

7. He holds almost nothing sacred. He has never met true greatness, but he has experienced the abyss of everyday life. What position can he possibly occupy in the world which he is about to enter? The three-year-old child has become a fifteen-year-old who despises all authority. Aside from filth and uncleanness, he has yet to find anything which might stir him to any high enthusiasm.

8. As he begins the more demanding parts of his life, he falls into the ruts he has learned from his father. He wanders about, comes home Heaven knows when, beats the tattered creature who was once his mother, curses God and the world, and finally he is sentenced to a prison for juvenile delinquents.

9. Here, he gets his final polish. (Hitler, 1926: *Mein Kampf*, chapter 2, p. 24, paragraph numbers added)

There is so much in these paragraphs that merits emphasis. I have underlined the points I would pay most attention to, and I invite the reader to list their own. We all shudder at the impact Hitler had. Here, out of his own mouth, are the reasons why.

We can reverse these points, given enough resolve, courage and insight. But time is now much shorter than in 1945, when Hitler, in his bunker, would have pressed the nuclear button, had he had one—thereby ensuring that parts of Europe would still be poisonously radioactive today, and for centuries hereafter. Hitler had found no other way of dealing with his gigantic and lethal figments. There is one. But we'd better hurry, if we're going to benefit from it.

You can see that Hitler was entirely convinced that his inhumanity was a learned disease. Sadly for us all, he didn't have anyone close or trusted enough to allow him to unlearn it. The other serial killers I worked with in Parkhurst Prison did—but do we, collectively, have enough trustworthy evidence to persuade us to cure, or better, prevent, all Hitler's recurring progeny?

### **5. The Way to Cure Nucleargeddon Is Paved With Good Intentions**

MARTIN LUTHER KING WAS MAGNIFICENT. He robustly declared, in the teeth of strident opposition, that violence was wrong. This paper seeks to add medical weight to his inspiring declaration. Once violence is viewed as a disease, several things follow. First, it allows a calmer more dispassionate assessment of where it comes from, and how it can best be tackled. Second, it encourages us to put our energies and resources into first reducing it, then insisting on its elimination. Thirdly, it opens the way to a more peaceful view of human beings—one in which social delight can defeat social harm. And finally, it allows for all mental tribulations to be viewed as deficiency disorders, diseases which lack emotional support. Once available, this ensures that you no longer need to go through life's tribulations while consistently seeing yourself as an emotional dwarf. Simple, not easy, but doable.

But before we achieve these sunny uplands, there's a challenge which must be answered—why was Martin Luther King killed? It's all very well being idealistic, with a passion for loving the entire human race—but murderous things happen within our species, and you ignore this dark side at your peril. Hate exists, and doesn't evaporate simply by wishing it didn't. You have to find out where it comes from, so as to be able to stop it coming. So answers please—why was this hero shot? Is this what we do with pioneers? If people step outside the “norm” do they deserve all they get? Especially when advocating softer, gentler, more delightful ways of proceeding through this challenging life?

There are probably as many answers to these questions, as there were “explanations” for scurvy, before the arrival of vitamin C. So, given the persisting absence of Absolute Scientific Knowledge (Johnson, 2011 and later), we are left to our own devices—what is it that makes more sense to us, than otherwise? More, why is change so often ferociously opposed? I’m sure many seafarers actively opposed eating lemons, and some would have done so violently. So if you put your head above the parapet, to take in a wider perspective, you risk immolation.

However, as with Martin Luther King, there will be those brave enough to take a deeper view, to advocate a different approach, to recommend benignity rather than the reverse. And for those who wish to look, I offer the following.

We all start small. Indeed when we’re born, we are positively undersized. If we didn’t grow at all, we’d be dwarfs. It’s the same with our minds. To begin with, we can do nothing for ourselves—we are 100% dependent. Other species give rise to young who can run about and peck things, from the moment they see the light of day—we don’t. We need looking after. If we’re not looked after, we’re dead. And we know this. You could call it altruism, charity, goodness-of-heart by the people who feed and clean us—or you could call it normal human parenting. And when it works well, it’s a joy all round.

Sadly, it’s a skill that needs to be taught. And if your parents didn’t teach you, then how are you to know? Too often therefore, being small physically, can persist in the mind for life. Ergo you find people, grown to full size, yet fixed in their minds as being only 2 feet (60 cms) tall. This is not conducive to success. Parents have two obligations to their offspring—bring them up, and bring them up to be independent. Not easy, if they’ve never been shown how to do it for themselves. But, since we are a cognitive species, we can learn. Or at least we can learn when we’re not terrified. Because being terrified closes off our thinking gear—our frontal lobes and speech centre, without which we are dumb brutes—we are paralytic. Bessel-Blocks allow ridiculously, even psychotically, dwarfed self-assessment to persist for life—only remitting when the initial emotional deficit is unfrozen.

Emotional Dwarfism is no more than elongated physical dwarfism. If enough trustworthy emotional support can be supplied, then Bessel-Blocks can be unblocked—but only for those confident enough to look. Once unblocked, you will find that human beings do not intend harm. The way to hell is not paved with good intentions—that’s a pessimism born of faulty emotional education. What we are is a social species, and we relish engaging with one another, and also working together against an ineluctably chaotic environment—we find delight in doing so. It just comes with the territory. The tragedy is, our way is too often emotionally crushed, before we even begin. However, once opened, then we *can* blossom. And that is not only delicious, it is indeed a joy to behold. Try it.

## 6. Conclusion

“Distracted”. That’s the most accurate diagnosis for all mental afflictions—ranging from hate, psychosis, violence, up to and including Nucleargeddon. If you insist, because you cannot see any different, in going through adult life as if you were (emotionally) still only 60 cms (2 feet) tall, then your unreality will curdle your life—and if you’re powerful, ours too. How can you focus on delight, if you’re about to be thrown away by a huge, overpowering (shadowy) monster, just as you were when aged 2?

Trust is the antidote to fear. Do you trust this line of reasoning? Why should you? Since Science has collapsed, it’s no longer possible to prove this without contention—which means it needs you to consent, to get

involved, to make the decision yourself—indeed to take responsibility. This, after all, is what your parents should have brought you up to do—bring the child up, *and* bring the child up to be independent—not easy if they’ve never been taught how, either.

Emotional Dwarfism or “Distracted”—no other psychiatric diagnosis makes sense. If your mental furniture is populated by monsters 6 meters (20 feet) tall, then reality loses its charm—and unrealities, irrationalities even psychotic symptoms can flourish, uncontested by too many indulgent psychiatrists. Once thought and speech are blocked, terrors have free reign, and can expand at random, limited only by the human imagination, which we all know, is limitless. New horrors can be conjured up whenever there’s a thinking vacuum.

This paper closes with a handful of Trauma Tetrads. We start with “Freda”, who in September, 1986, first opened the gates for me.

(1) Was her father wrong to threaten her life with a hatchet, aged 6? YES.

(2) Could she blame him, 34 years later? NO.

(3) Were we both puzzled why she was still frightened of him, though he’d been dead for some 4 years, by that time? YES. And

(4) Did either of us know at the time, that this speechlessness was the root cause of so much? NO. But the ride has been exhilarating, ever since.

“Lenny” was a lifer in Parkhurst Prison, who proved my point soon enough to stop me losing heart. He responded within 5 months, thereby rescuing my aspirations—

(1) Was Lenny’s mother wrong to batter him so much? YES.

(2) Could he tell her this? NO.

(3) Should he have been able to? YES. And

(4) Did he know that all his symptoms of violence came from this speechlessness? NO. But when he did, they went.

Next is “Alec”, a serial killer who took 24 months to grow up emotionally.

(1) Was Alec’s father wrong to throw his mother down stairs (when Alec was 4)? YES.

(2) Could he tell his father this (aged 24)? NO.

(3) Should he have been able to? YES. And

(4) Did he know that all his symptoms of serial-killing came from his inability to tell his father this? NO.

But when he did, they went.

Unless we understand where Hitler’s atrocities came from, we are destined to succumb to worse, next time terminally.

(1) Was Hitler’s father wrong to thrash him so frequently, and to subject him to *“immoral displays, even at that age. [which] make one’s hair stand on end”*? YES.

(2) Could he ever tell his father this? NO. He flew into rages when his childhood was referred to, even tangentially.

(3) Should he have been able to? YES. And

(4) Did he know that all his symptoms of tyranny came from his inability to do this? NO. But they did.

Finally, for us all—

(1) Are children smaller than adults, and therefore 100% at their mercy? YES.

(2) Are children immune from memorising terror? NO.

(3) Should they (and we) be able to let the past go? YES. And

(4) Do they (and we) know that verbalising the unspeakable, releases them? NO. But when they do, we blossom.

Can we wake up, in time?

### Acknowledgement

Again, Leila Lee’s reliable and trustworthy interest and support has been invaluable in writing this paper. Thank you.

### Please Note

EMOTIONS, which form the life-blood of this paper, can never be **objectively** or **scientifically** defined or measured. That would be like expecting to be able to define or measure the shape of a pint (or litre) of water. It is also why video evidence is indispensable (see especially Johnson 2021d), and why **scientific** and **objective brainscan evidence** of their detrimental impact on thought and speech is of such vital importance. Happily, human beings are adept at **assessing** emotion—especially when new-born—and being so resilient, we can then lay them to rest, once we’ve been shown how.

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