

A taste of madness

[Psychology](#), [Goal](#)



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Taste Of Madness In the play known as Hamlet, written by William Shakespeare, the sane Hamlet occasionally switches between a state of sanity and insanity. When madness complements Hamlet's purpose, he puts on an act of extravagance. On the other hand, when sanity proves acceptable, Hamlet returns to his normal, logical self. Hamlet claims he is "mad north-north-west" (II. ii. 376), meaning his sanity is uncontrollable and unpredictable. Hence, in order to achieve his short-term goals, Hamlet shifts between sanity and insanity, which ironically, stalls his chance at revenge. First off, Hamlet leads into a realm of insanity in order to achieve his short-term goals. Hamlet does so by making use of his alleged insanity as a weapon. He does so by converting insanity into the arrangement of either words or actions. Furthermore, I see being strange that Hamlet shows characteristics of insanity strictly towards enemies or his enemy's allies. A situation in which this was evident, was when Hamlet verbally attacks Ophelia with words: "are you honest" (III. i. 104), "are you fair" (III. i. 106). Hamlet "speak[s] daggers" (III. ii. 387) to Gertrude, because she is an obstacle to Hamlet. Also, Hamlet murders Polonius with such hate that Hamlet guarantees Polonius is "dead, for a ducat, dead" (III. iv. 25). Hamlet gravely harms both Ophelia and Gertrude with his words of insanity. This happens while Polonius is sent to the grave with his actions of insanity. All three people, Ophelia, Gertrude, and Polonius, are Claudius' allies, and by hurting Claudius' allies, Hamlet is indirectly hurting Claudius. This is Hamlet's short-term goal: Rodriguez 2 to rid Claudius of allies. Besides using insanity to harm Claudius' allies, the mere presence of Hamlet's insanity troubles

Claudius. Hamlet understands the potential of madness; madness blurs reality and shrouds truth, therefore, causing confusion. Claudius sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to find out what " unknown afflicts [Hamlet] thus" (II. ii. 17). Polonius tries to " find / where truth is hid" (II. ii. 155-156). Gradually, Claudius becomes more furious with Hamlet and knows that " madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go" (III. i. 90). Hamlet's insanity causes Claudius to send people to uncover the mysteries of his insanity. Hamlet's feigned madness causes Claudius to accumulate anger. Claudius' confusion is Hamlet's other short-term goal. In brief, Hamlet's insanity helps him achieve his short-term goals of eradicating Claudius' allies and confusing Claudius. On the other hand, Hamlet returns to sanity and uses it as a method of concentration. Whenever Hamlet is sane, he is focused on the current situation. When Hamlet encounters the ghost, he tells it to " speak", because he is " bound to hear" (I. v. 7). While speaking with the ghost, Hamlet cries for his " prophetic soul" (I. v. 42). Hamlet is also very focused when speaking and listening to Horatio. When Horatio tells Hamlet about the ghost of Hamlet's father, Hamlet asks Horatio to " let [him] hear" (I. ii. 194). While sane, Hamlet's thoughts are clear and he is focused on the topic. When meeting his father's ghost, he pays full attention to it. When Hamlet speaks to Horatio about Hamlet's father's ghost, Hamlet listens and speaks with sanity. Hamlet also refers to his " prophetic soul" (I. v. 42). Prophets are usually associated with clarity, thought, and knowledge. Since Hamlet states that he has a " prophetic soul" (I. v. 42), it shows that his mind is very clear, unlike the mind of the insane. Hamlet's short-term goal is to concentrate when necessary. Furthermore, when Hamlet is alone, his thoughts are very

thorough. For example, Hamlet's "to be or not to be" (III. i. 57) speech is very clearly thought out. Hamlet's thoughts are much more sophisticated than those of the insane. Hamlet's second Rodriguez 3 short-term goal is to philosophize. Through the return into sanity, Hamlet is able to accomplish both his short-term goals of concentration and philosophizing. However, due to the constant reversal between sanity and insanity, Hamlet's revenge is slowed. Hamlet's mind becomes twisted due to constant changes in personality, between sanity and insanity. Early in the play, Hamlet says that he will put on an "antic disposition" (I. v. 173). However, in the last scene of the play, Hamlet tells Horatio that "in my heart there was a kind of fighting" (V. ii. 4). At one point he says that he will fake insanity, while later, he says that there is fighting in his heart, which hints insanity. Due to this, Hamlet becomes indecisive. Hamlet's inability to act causes his revenge to be slowed. Hamlet uses between sanity and insanity in order to achieve his short-term goals. He uses his supposed insanity against enemies and sanity as a way of creating concentration. Yet, with the constant switch of sanity and insanity, Hamlet's plan of revenge is brought together slower than he may have anticipated