

The experience essay

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



Introduction

The social psychology of altruistic actions impinges on values embodied in love and selflessness. As often as we interact with each other, daily, there is the tendency to forget how important acts of kindnesses are towards ourselves and then others. The truth is that if we are not kind to ourselves it is extremely difficult to be kind to others since psychologically every action we take initiates from memories stored within the subconscious. (Reuter, 2010)

The experience

It was last summer when I was making my way down my street walking towards the nearby store. The temperature was way above a hundred degrees; vehicular traffic was heavy and not very gracious to pedestrians trying to cross this busy intersection. In the distance before reaching the intersection I observed the frail stature of a woman standing with her cane out- stretched trying to make her way to the other end.

Interestingly, she was standing there at the pedestrian crossing where vehicles were supposed to stop and at least give her priority due to her condition. This is how I saw it, but everyone seemed to have had a different view point. It took me about ten minutes to get to where she was standing. As I watched the event, at first I thought that I could just scamper across from where I was without getting to where she was, leaving her alone to the traffic.

However, something inside prevented me from following through with the sequel of circumstances surrounding this apparently blind woman's crossing

the street. Subsequently, with much scrutiny I assessed the situation. As I got closer there was a distinct feases and urine odor coming from her body. This somewhat made me more compassionate towards seeing her get across the street. It could have been she was standing there so long that she messed herself unable to get to the bathroom.

Gently, I stepped close enough to her, said my name; asked where she was going and if I could be of any help. Politely in Standard English she responded, ‘ certainly, I am trying to get home. I have been standing here for more than an hour and the traffic is not allowing me to go even though I am putting my cane out.’

It was then I confirmed my delight to help. I got into the middle of the pedestrian crossing to stop the traffic. At the time I knew that some vehicles might have simply driven over me. About two times I did have to jump out of the way to save my life, but eventually I was able to get their attention in allowing us both to cross the street. She was so grateful. Her home was just a block away and she lived alone. I was happy to be of service.

Analysis

From a theoretical perspective the argument has been that there is no true altruism whether it is personal, professional or social responsibility.

Personally, there have been numerous assumptions to suggest that people demonstrating altruism do so to benefit them or clear their conscience of guilt.

Professionally, roles many times forge altruism. Again it can be argued that this emerges from a space of self aggrandizement pertaining to the psychology of ‘feeling good’ about rendering kindness and receiving praise for it. Precisely, it is the ‘need to be needed’ attitude, which in turn fosters codependence from both the person rendering the act and recipient. There is the ‘need to be needed’ to receive and give, respectively. (Altruism is selfless)

Altruism when applied to psychology utilizing Maslow’s pyramid of needs states that a person can only demonstrate this quality after the lower level needs are satisfied. (Psychology & Altruism). When applied temporary relief is derived, but the human condition is not cured. The woman I helped across the street is still blind and would need a similar service later.

As participants in our social structure, there are definite personal and professional responsibilities pertaining to altruism that must be acknowledged. Parents are the greatest examples of altruism in their parenting relationships. People enlisted in the armed forces of their country are engaging in altruism since their professional practice enforces selflessness. Fire fighters and rescue squads are all forced to demonstrate this value due to their professional responsibilities.

Therefore, the future of psychology, specifically in relation to altruism, in contemporary societies must realize the design of theories that would encourage altruism from a space of authenticity. The question “why am I doing this’ must be truthfully answered. In today’s world when altruism is practiced everyone has know and an elaborate ceremony is held in honor of

the person or organization. Why was the act done? It is suggested that it was undertaken for the personal glorification that could be derived.

Conclusion

To elaborate on the future of psychology, specifically in relation to altruism, in contemporary societies is to say that when we perform our altruistic acts let it be done in private and the one who sees in private will reward us openly with comparable blessings for everyone to see. (Bible). This is a magnificent psychological development we can embrace. Here where the real benefit of altruism lies.

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