

South Australian Royal Commission
Into
Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

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Bachelor of Psychology

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Content

Page 2 Introduction and background.

Page 6 Why has Janov Primal Therapy not been researched.

Page 8 Prevention, Early intervention, Response, Recovery and Healing.

Plus A plea from the heart for future generations.

Page 10. Letter to a journalist.

Further information to support this submissions claims.

Introduction

This submission to the South Australian Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual violence is based on a new understanding of how the human brain works. This new understanding explains the underlining drivers of not only domestic, family, and sexual violence, but nearly all mental disorders that are causing grief in human activity.

This understanding comes from Dr Arthur Janov's work starting from the late 1960's. Dr Janov discovered that the human brain has three separate levels of psychological functioning. These levels are the cognitive level in the prefrontal cortex, the feeling level within the limbic system, and the level of sensation in the midbrain/ brainstem area.

Most importantly, from a Three Levels of Brain standpoint, the level of sensation is by far the most influential in how the brain functions. This understanding makes Janov's approach significantly different from anything else. Not just in a minor way, but in ways that will change the course of human evolution. Science will one day prove beyond doubt how the three different levels of mind work together to form human consciousness. That is how significant Dr Janov's discovery is. To the purpose of this submission, I will just say that the level of sensation holds the information that we need to understand why domestic, family, and sexual violence is so prevalent in human relationships.

The Three Levels of Mind can also be used to understand why the current medical profession has trouble understanding causes, and so finds it difficult to find meaningful cures.

All their learning comes from the intellectual level. Universities all around the world require a high IQ. This focus puts a massive importance on the intellectual level of mind, while almost totally disregarding or understanding what true feelings are. The level of sensation at the lowest level of the brain's psychological mind is almost totally disregarded in terms of how the human brain forms consciousness.

In a healthy organism all three levels would contribute to consciousness in a healthy life affirming way but serious problems can occur when early trauma is involved. Early life trauma that is severe, prolonged, or frequent will force an organism into a survival response using all resources available to it. What those resources are will depend on the developmental state of the brain at the time of the trauma, but they are extremely limited regardless.

Repression of the traumatic experience is often the go to response. Perhaps it would help to conceptualise the repression of these trauma experiences at the deeper levels as the formation of a subconscious. These experiences necessarily become subconscious because of what they contain. The traumas being discussed here are life threatening experiences. Examples might be a lack of oxygen at birth, prolonged lack of touch, physical abuse, destruction of self by verbal abuse and control or complete abandonment. The repression must be effective for life to continue, in short it 'must' remain detached from our consciousness.

Ultimately this split between what we think and what we truly feel leads to a very dysfunctional organism. An organism filled with deeply buried pain and a powerful overwhelming need to keep it buried. I cannot emphasize enough that it is the 'threat' of having our defences overwhelmed and forced into experiencing this buried early pain that drives the destructive patterns of behaviour society is experiencing. If the early trauma is severe enough there are no limits to what humans can do to avoid being plunged into their past experiences. The imperative to keep past pain buried in the unconscious drives and explains almost all dysfunctional human behaviour including the violence, manipulation and control we force onto others.

From a Janov Primal Therapy understanding, violence in all its forms has rage at its core – rage at not being loved by parents. Personally, I was shocked at the amount and intensity of my own rage once it was uncovered, that is, from being unconscious to conscious awareness.

Every person, male or female, who undergoes Janov Primal Therapy will eventually uncover their own inner rage at not getting their survival needs met.

Simplistically there are two ways to address this issue. One is to manage the problem or two is to address the underlying cause (cause not causes) and pursue a healing outcome. For the past hundred years the approach has been almost exclusively management, such as more control (laws, social boundaries, punishments and so on), chemical management by medication or psychological interventions (which are unfortunately almost always another form of management).

Management can, at times, have an immediate effect and this is seductive to those seeking a solution. Unfortunately, it does not address the underlying cause and without constant ongoing reinforcement it will 'always' fail, sometimes with devastating consequences.

The therapy that Dr Janov developed addresses early trauma and allows the patient to have direct experience of these important deeper levels. These levels are hard to explain, but in a healthy organism they give a person access to a huge knowledge base that leads to healthy life enhancing decisions. My own Primal Therapy helped me to find and process early trauma enabling me to become aware of this deeper level, more connected to it and more able to be guided by its sensation-based knowledge. This source of knowledge was developed over millions of years and has been a vital part of our successful evolution. More than ever, humanity needs to reconnect to these two lower levels of the brain and the type of knowledge they carry.

That knowledge includes the awareness that domestic, family, and sexual violence are all anti-evolutionary in nature, and must be eliminated from the human species, or face the awful consequences.

The medical profession does not understand this phenomenon because they do not have to experience their own Three Levels of Mind as the most important part of all their training.

When patients experience the level of sensation during the process of Janov Primal Therapy, they begin to realise that early imprinting makes up nearly 100% of our personalities – how we act and react, and what we think.

Some thoughts on why Janov Primal Therapy and the Three Levels of Mind has not been researched.

This commission may well ask the question as to why Janov Primal Therapy and the reality of the Three Levels of Mind has not been researched, especially since Janov made some big claims about Primal Therapy being able to cure most neurosis.

There are a number of reasons, but I will offer my own thoughts on why the science has not been done.

1. Janov's discovery coincided with the flower power counter-culture of the late 1960's and early 1970's. In many places, his work has been passed off as an outcome of the times; a pseudoscientific idea that was latched onto by a counter-culture. A professor by the name of Harold Gouzoules, who is currently researching animal and human screams, is still promoting this view in 2024. Incidentally, he and his team at Emory university in Atlanta, United States will never understand a human 'primal scream' until they experience Janov Primal Therapy for themselves.
2. Albert Ellis and John Northrup were influential American psychologists at that time. They can still be seen on YouTube rubbishing the idea that an emotional release would cure most neurosis. Janov Primal Therapy is a bit more complicated than that, but it still can be said that releasing Primal Pain is the cure for nearly all mental disorders.
3. Psychology and Psychiatry have become intellectual ways of understanding the human brain. In terms of the Three Levels, the intellectual level is only about 10% of brain function (the proverbial tip of the iceberg). Dr Janov's discovery included the feelings to begin with, and then later found some patients going into a different 'brain space' which has been recognised now as the sensation level of mind. Any person

who undergoes Janov Primal Therapy for long enough will agree the feeling and sensation level of mind make up roughly 90% of psychological brain function.

4. Many people, including psychologists and psychiatrists, have read some of Janov's books and then adapt their own approaches and call it 'Primal Therapy.' This has led to inconsistent, and often bad results, further tarnishing the reputation of quality Primal Therapy.
5. As Dr Janov developed the therapeutic process of therapy, he made some mistakes in the interventions that were used. These mistakes left some people worse off and have unfortunately been written into folklore. Despite these early setbacks Janov and his team worked on improving the process to achieve better outcomes. Janov and his team got to understand the importance and strength of innate evolutionary forces, so the development of the therapy process had to accommodate these forces. Many of the current crop of therapies either ignore evolution, or are unaware of the forces they are dealing with. My own therapy occurred between the years 2004 and 2009, and it has not only saved my life, but allowed me to live a more awesome and loving life.
6. I have been in clinical practice for fifteen years and have written several books. It is my observation that Janov Primal Therapy is further from peoples' consciousness now in 2024 than it was when I started therapy in 2004. Our intellectualism is almost completely out of touch with our sensation level of mind, and that is having many sad and bad manifestations for humanity. Not just in domestic, family, and sexual violence, but in every area of human existence.

Prevention, Early Intervention, Response

Recovery and Healing.

I was going to try and answer these suggested questions, but it would be pointless trying to deal with these issues if the underlying causes are not understood and dealt with.

After much thought I will now use this space for a heartfelt plea.

We as a nation will not improve the mental health of our citizens to any great degree by investing more and more money.

What is needed is a whole new way of understanding how the human brain works. That will be the Three Levels of Mind, with the intellectual level being 10% and the feelings/sensations 90%.

Whenever mental disorders are talked about, much of the blame is put on the government of the day. All they can do is throw more money at the problem and hope the mental health of the nation will somehow miraculously improve.

Here is my view of the situation.

The mental health people have resolutely refused to look at what Dr Janov discovered. The Americans have thrown over \$100 billion at mental health, and not one dollar, as far as I know, on researching Janov's underlying premise that the human brain has three distinctly different levels of psychological functioning.

For my own efforts at getting Janov Primal Therapy researched I have never been allowed past the 'gatekeepers' at all the universities I have approached.

It is the mental health industry that took the wrong path over a century ago, away from sensation and embracing the intellectual, and they are sticking resolutely to that path. They

are not evil people, I am sure they are all well-meaning, but how does one tell them that the human brain has three separate levels of psychological functioning, and that their university degrees only teach them about the intellectual level. The other two levels can only be understood through actual experience.

I see that as the job of this Royal Commission.

Many scientists have said there is no scientific basis for the current approach and understanding of mental health. The Three Levels of Mind will provide a very sound scientific basis, and out of that will come a solid understanding of the causes and cures of all mental disorders.

My heartfelt plea to this Royal Commission on domestic, family, and sexual violence is to strongly recommend that money be allocated for researching the Three Levels of Mind.

The following text is a letter that was written some time ago by myself and a psychologist friend who underwent an early version of the Therapy. It was presented to a journalist who showed some interest in Janov Primal Therapy. The hope was that they would print a series of articles putting forward the case for Janov Primal Therapy to become a recognised and important contributor in understanding mental disorders. Like other journalists and universities that have been approached, that potato seems to be ‘too hot to handle.’

The text has been included in this submission because it adds to the urgency of the need for the Three Levels of Psychological Mind to be researched.

The Dysfunctional Brain. One cause – One Cure

What are we trying to say?

The current view of the Mental Health industry assumes that the cognitive level of mind in the prefrontal cortex is the most powerful and influential level. Thus, cognitive behavioural therapies dominate psychology’s attempts at curing mental disorders.

Emotions are regarded as secondary in power to cognition, and are to be controlled by Positive Thinking, Meditation, and Nervous System Regulation. This type of focus is on management rather than a cure.

The Two Levels Down paradigm is a very intellectual way of understanding the human mind. This understanding is very obviously not working.

Psychiatry uses chemicals that suppresses and dulls brain function, (personal experience). This approach is also obviously not working.

What we have found is that the human brain/mind has three levels of psychological functioning. The first, and most powerful and influential level, are the brainstem sensations. In evolutionary terms, it is the oldest part of the brain. It provides an extremely strong and rigid foundation that supported (and still supports) our evolutionary success.

Nowhere within psychiatry and psychology is this level of brain function understood, or allowed for in finding causes and cures for the myriads of ways the human brain is dysfunctional.

The next level to develop was the feelings within the limbic system. Our feelings tell us what the results of our brainstem sensations are. Then we observe our feelings in the top level of our mind, the cognitive level. This Three Levels Up paradigm needs to be integrated into our understanding of how the human brain works.

What we are saying then, is that our human experiences, imprinted within brainstem sensations, are vastly stronger in forming our mental constructs than the intellectual mind, and by many orders of magnitude. Once again, this is nowhere near understood by

psychologists and psychiatrists, and we can also add neuroscientists, biologists, philosophers, and the pharmaceutical industry to that list.

How do we know this

We underwent Janov Primal Therapy. That is a therapy developed by Arthur Janov from the late 1960's onwards. This therapy takes a person from the intellectual level of mind, down into the feeling level of mind. After many months, or a year or more, the person then breaks through into the sensation level of mind.

When a person gets to experience their level of sensation, they are in no doubt that all mental disorders have their genesis at this level. They understand why Cognitive Behavioural Therapies and psychiatric medication have no effect at this level of mind.

People like Bessel van der Kolk, Peter Levine and Stephen Porges, who are some of the leading psychotherapists in America, are trying their best to unravel the mysteries of the human brain. They have not been successful (by Janov Primal Therapy standards) because all their efforts are intellectually based.

Intellectual knowledge can be passed from human to human via speech (lectures) and writing (university textbooks).

What we are trying to say is that the most important transfer of knowledge between humans is via experience. The level of sensation responds to experience only. It does not understand or respond to the spoken word.

Love is the strongest sensation emanating from the level of sensation.

The Benefits of Adopting the Three levels Up paradigm

Many critics of psychology and psychiatry say that they do not have a scientific basis for their claims. The Three Levels Up paradigm will provide an extremely strong and scientifically provable basis for all mental health issues.

Many people struggle with the notion of spirituality and the meaning of life. The intense feeling that comes from Love covers both these issues. In fact, most of our 'spiritual' experiences are actions from brainstem sensations. The beauty, love and ecstasy described by everybody who experiences a Near Death experience, are coming from brainstem sensations.

Love will become known as the main evolutionary survival mechanism for humans (and maybe all mammals).

This new Three Levels of Mind working up paradigm will bring everything that humans struggle with under one heading. For example, in mental disorders, we are investigating hundreds of different causes, and thousands of different cures or management protocols. The Three Levels Up paradigm shows there is one main cause (Lack of love) and therefore one main cure (experience the Pain generated by that lack of Love).

Such a simple understanding!

Psychologists and psychiatrists will not need a decade of learning useless theories and doing insignificant research for the gain of hierarchal degrees. They will only need to learn the simple steps to take a person down through their three levels of brain function.

To put it another way:

It is our contention that anyone who monitors the mental health industry in depth would be forced to acknowledge that effective and durable interventions remain out of reach. Further that when asked, health experts would be forced to admit that symptom management is our best realistic outcome. Anything resembling a genuine cure remains beyond the reach of our current understanding and abilities.

This is despite more than a hundred years of dedicated effort, great advances in neurological technology and billions of dollars. The cause and treatment of mental illness remains largely a mystery.

Every so often a new or re-packaged solution is trotted out and it becomes fashionable for a period of time. Eventually it proves to be just as ineffectual as the last and is destined to be replaced with yet another solution.

To further complicate this problem is the issue of vested interests. For example; schools of psychology and psychiatry with all the attached professions, experts and careers at stake. Perhaps even more problematic is the pharmaceutical industry and the very lucrative market of mental health drugs. There is clearly considerable interest in maintaining the status quo for some. (Push back can be expected by anyone suggesting an alternative approach).

Our argument is that mental health must develop a new paradigm, a paradigm that incorporates an understanding of the evolutionary path of the human brain. In particular, the language of the early brain which is not speech, but rather sensation.

Perhaps an example of how this has all gone terribly amiss is the DSM 5 (Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). This manual serves the mental health industry as a guide to diagnosing and treating mental disorders and is routinely updated and changed, hence the 5.

Our argument is that the “disorders” identified, studied, and listed in this very influential book are not disorders but rather symptoms. Imagine for a moment if all these disorders are symptoms driven by the same cause, early brain stem trauma. The implications are staggering, for example the focus and effort of all current interventions are on symptoms without ever addressing a cause. Furthermore, they are almost always intellectually/logically/speech based interventions (CBT for example) using the higher order (recently evolved) parts of the brain. This would explain why interventions are so short lived or require constant reinforcement to maintain even a vestige of effective control over

behaviour. This is the medical equivalent of dressing a wound without removing the source of infection.

Unfortunately, the rabbit hole gets much deeper than this. We suggested above there may be powerful vested interests in maintain the status quo. This need to maintain the status quo pales into insignificance when it comes to the individuals need to maintain their own internal status quo. If we have a traumatised early brain (unfortunately it can be argued almost everyone does) then there is a very powerful need to keep that trauma experience repressed. Remember, it is a brain stem memory this is a felt experience with all the original terror and physical symptoms attached. It is not an intellectual/conceptual experience.

Repression is a survival mechanism for early life and once the need is established the human brain will go to great lengths to maintain this repression throughout the lifespan. Early trauma repression is the fundamental driving force behind all aberrant behaviours, thoughts, and beliefs because they are needed to maintain the repression.

Again, the implications are profound because this suggests we are a largely subconsciously driven species making choices based on our need to remain protected/insulated from early trauma experiences. In short, we are a species that makes choices based on needs developed early in life rather than an actual here and now need, “without knowing we are doing so.” Unfortunately, this leads to humans frequently making less than healthy personal choices and by extension societal ones as well.

Unfortunately, the implications for our species are profound because if we continue on the current path of understanding and remain largely a subconscious species the chances of choosing a healthy future remain extremely unlikely.

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