

A Short Study of Toltec Philosophy

From Diana's Book: "How to Potty Train your Brain - Toltec Tools & Wisdom"

Who are Toltecs, Anyway?

Toltecs are people that gathered together to study awareness and perception, most famously at Teotihuacan (Teo for short), Mexico, north east of Mexico City. Dates can be vague, but they started around 70 BC to build/land in the area, and abandoned it (Teo) around 700 -750 AD. It is thought that they left because, as often happens, local resources started drying up – but no one knows for sure.

Once they moved away from Teo, they created other sites and also merged into other tribes like the Mayans. Their influence is found in other areas like Chichen Itza and Tula, for example. Thankfully, Teo is an extremely well preserved ruin complex that is more than worth visiting.

Understand, too – Toltecs weren't a race of people, and not really a tribe like Mayans and Aztecs. Toltecs could be seen more as explorers – of the mysteries and realities of us humans. And they were masters at awareness – which is what today's Toltec teachers teach.

Who Created this Mess and Why Toltecs?

Toltecs didn't create the mess humanity's brains finds themselves in but, fortunately for us, their study of human development figured a way out of the proverbial 'poop'. They made this discovery by keenly observing human nature, on both a physical level and an energetic one. Early Toltecs didn't ask 'why' humans create so much poo as much as they looked at how and what we did to create it, and the effects it had on ourselves and others.

Here is a general run-down of relevant Toltec concepts:

Domestication

Much like our pets and animals, humans are 'domesticated'. We usually get uncomfortable with this one because we consider ourselves above it all, but the truth is – we're domesticated.

Even before birth, our parents and environment have an influence on us. Once we're born, the domestication begins in earnest. We learn everything our family has to teach us. We are dry sponges, soaking up everything around us. We're told how to 'be' to be acceptable within our family, religion, culture and society. We're trained as to what's right and wrong and what's appropriate to think, say, fear, believe, eat, wear, study, do, not do and so on.

All of this training is designed to keep us safe and behaving correctly – as our parents, religion, culture and society deem these concepts to be – not necessarily how we deem these to be. Yet as young children, we lap it up because our parents are on par with God at that age and of course they know what's best for us....right?

Usually, our domestication is accomplished through a system of punishment and reward. If you were 'good', you'd get smiles, hugs, love and approval from your parents. If you were 'bad' you'd get

frowns, disapproval and their withholding of hugs and love (or a ‘time out’ if you were lucky). Many that didn’t get ‘time outs’ received a spanking, switching, yelling, beating or worse....all of them.

To a young child, the withholding of love and approval can literally feel like death, just like a beating can. Young children are completely dependent upon their caregivers for food, shelter, love and safety. If any of these essentials are withheld, complete panic can set in, along with an overwhelming desire to feel safe and loved – which usually results in the child’s compliance. This is why ‘punishment and reward’ is such an effective training tool.

This is where the ‘games’ began. Despite the usually well-meaning efforts of our parents, ‘punishment and reward’ taught us to crave that which makes us happy, unafraid and safe – and to avoid or deny that which makes us unhappy, fearful or unsafe.

Book of Law – or ‘The Rules’

As young children grow through domestication, they are taught the rules of life. They also make up their own rules through personal experiences. All of these rules get written into our internal ‘Book of Law’ or ‘Book of Life’ that we carry with us – always. *Everything* gets recorded in this book, which is where the computer aspect of our brain excels. Whether we consciously remember an incident or not, the rules we create from our experiences are written in our book, and they are incredibly efficient at controlling our reality.

Remember, repeated experiences cause neural pathways to become permanently etched in our brains. Repetition is the key that moves short-term memory into long-term memory. It’s like remembering a new phone number. At first, you have to write it down to remember it. Once you’ve repeated it a few times, it becomes ‘etched’ in your brain. It doesn’t take more than a few ‘whacks’ for us to learn what to do - *or a few hugs*.

The Vase Story (learned from HeatherAsh Amara) is a good example of how this works:

Let’s imagine ourselves to be young children, and in this case we’re all little girls with a little brother (sorry guys, you can reverse the roles and still get the message.). Let’s also imagine that we’ve had an amazing, loving mother that’s never punished us. OK, got the fantasy?

One day your Mom was having a really, really bad day. She was yelled at by her boss for something she didn’t do; her car wouldn’t start and when it did it meant she hit rush hour traffic about the time her air conditioner broke and the chocolate she’d bought melted on the car seat. Then, the babysitter called to tell her that since Mom was now thirty minutes late, she absolutely *had* to leave to catch her plane and the kids would only be alone for five minutes. Now, on top of everything, Mom was also scared for her kids.

The babysitter leaves with an admonition to the children to not open the door for anyone (no matter what), and to stay out of the kitchen – period. The kids, experiencing a moment of unparalleled freedom, agree and begin to play tag around the house as the babysitter locks the door and leaves.

Brother and sister are having a grand time playing tag. As brother zips around the hallway, sister on his heels, his hand accidentally knocks over a vase on the table. It falls off and breaks on the floor, and his little girl jumps over it and continues to chase him because - this is fun!

A couple of minutes later, Mom frantically comes home after her truly horrendous day and opens the door to find the vase her Mother gave her, right before she died, lying broken in pieces on the hallway floor. Do you think Mom stayed calm? No way! The kids come careening around the corner and stop dead in their tracks.

The wonderful, loving Mom they knew is spitting mad and looks as if some demon has taken possession of her. For the first time ever, Mom *yells*, “Who broke my vase?” In shock, brother points to sister and says, “She did!” You start to protest, but Mom doesn’t want to hear it. She points at you and says, “Go to your room! NOW!” Crying, you flee the monster that used to be your Mother and go to your room. Brother has a smirk on his face, but Mom tells him, “You – go watch TV.”

So, in tears and scared to death, you go to your room. Is it likely you’ll think that Mom must have had a bad day and she just temporarily lost it? No, not likely at your age. What you do is cry. You feel how unfair Mom is being. You didn’t break the vase, brother did, but you’re the one being punished and yelled at. You feel very, very confused, hurt, scared and sorry for yourself. Your brain agonizes over it all, *and it begins to make up stories to explain what happened.*

This example illustrates how our personal beliefs start to be written. First, you could have the idea that Mom loves brother more, since she obviously listened to him and not you. Then you might consider that boys are liars. It becomes obvious that playing and having fun is a bad, bad, *BAD* thing. Equally obvious is that girls are not as good as boys because Mom didn’t believe you. Are you getting the picture here?

Now, begin to imagine the *rules* that could be written from the beliefs created by this one incidence, and guys, just reverse boys for girls:

Belief

boys get more love than girls
boys are more important than girls
boys are liars
boys get preferential treatment
playing causes problems
girls shouldn’t run
I am a bad person
I don’t deserve Mom’s love

Rule/Law

I have to work extra hard for love
give in to boys, let them win
never believe a word boys say
I deserve to be treated badly
never, *ever*, have too much fun
track is out, I’ll stick to music
I’ll just give up now
no one will ever love me

The list can go on and on, all of it developing beliefs, rules and agreements that get recorded in the ‘Book of Law’ that we carry through life with us.

Selective Evidence Gathering

Mom cools down and fixes dinner for everyone and comes to get you from your room. She apologizes for yelling at you and says she’s sorry. You, however, have now developed beliefs and agreements about the way things are, and you don’t believe her. You now *know* that she loves brother more. As a result, at dinner, you will see her passing the potatoes to brother first as evidence to support this belief. Due to our need to be right, and safe in our ‘rightness’, you will not even notice that she later passes the spinach to you first.

Our brains will filter out any and all evidence that does not support the beliefs and agreements we have made.

This is selective evidence gathering. As this child (you) goes through life, imagine what sort of relationships you'll have, especially with boys, if you believe that men are liars and they'll betray you, or that you don't deserve love? *Now* are you getting the picture?

Cognitive Dissonance

What happens, as we go through life and our Book of Law gets written, is that we develop contradicting laws, beliefs and rules. At six you might have been told repeatedly that children were meant to be seen and not heard, and this rule (or 'law') gets written on page seventy of your Book of Law. After a few years, you've got the message ingrained in your brain and the resulting rule (don't speak up) is so normal that it fades into your subconscious and you become a quiet child. You then enter your teens and things change. Now your teachers, friends and dates start telling you to speak up for yourself, to be seen *and* heard. Yikes! While not speaking up helped you to navigate your home life, the rule would not serve you if you wanted to excel at school, join the debate team or have dates and lots of friends.

This 'fight' between our old rules and our new rules creates a mental (cognitive) disagreement (dissonance). We believe two or more conflicting rules and they are all trying to determine our behavior. It's confusing, and this confusion can arise from very deep levels within us because we don't always remember the old rules. They were buried in our subconscious years ago, yet are still operating today. Confusion, insecurity, shame and guilt often arise as a result of the cognitive dissonance we feel when competing or contradictory rules from our Book of Law start to argue. I bet you can come up with a few of your own about now.

The Parasite

'Parasite' is a disturbing word, and Toltecs use it to describe an understandable (yet disturbing) relationship we all participate in within ourselves – usually unconsciously. I say 'understandable' because once you've gotten all the basics, it makes unfortunate 'sense' that we are the way we are – as crappy as that sometimes feels.

Toltecs define our Parasite as a combination of our Book of Law, our Judge and our Victim – and we all have a Parasite inside of us. The Parasite's primary goal is to keep us safe and to keep itself right – period – but usually as our five (or three or ten) year old self defined the words 'safe' and 'right'.

You would do well to remember that last line, since its importance cannot be stressed enough. *Your Parasite's primary goal is to keep you safe and right – no matter what.* This strategy was critical for us as children, but as we grow older, it starts to hinder us, usually at the expense of the life we lead: the people, love, amount of money, success, failure, job and friends that we do, and don't, have.

The remaining two components of the Parasite are the Judge and Victim. The Judge gets its start from the external judges in our life. As children we're told what's good and what's bad. We learn the 'good' judgments and are rewarded for being good little boys and girls. We're also told when we're 'bad' boys and girls and we are then punished accordingly. If we do what we're told, we're good. If we rebel, disobey or get too creative – we're bad. It's really this simple. This domestication, com-

bined with our creative ability to make up and internalize stories about our experiences, result in our Judge.

As we go through life, the external judges in our lives become internalized voices in our heads. We've learned our lessons well, and through repetition we've etched them firmly in our brains. We no longer need our parents, teachers or peers to tell us when we're being good or bad. We do it all on our own, over and over again, and often ad nauseam. These repeated experiences create well worn pathways, permanently etched into our brain, so the lessons, criticism, judgments, comparisons and beliefs soon become internal tyrants that never let up or give us a break.

From the Judge, the Victim is created. Our victim is a response to the judge, and its role involves avoiding responsibility and blaming anything or anyone else for what's going on. Our Parasites want to stay safe, remember, so it's easier if everything is someone (or something) else's fault. *Life seems so much easier that way.*

The voice of the victim sounds like: but it's not fair; it's not my fault; you made me mad/cry/hurt; the devil made me do it; my childhood is to blame; I can't help it; if only I was richer, smarter, more handsome, beautiful, in shape, skinny, strong, funny, serious, cooler, weirder - then things would be OK, or this wouldn't be happening. Get the picture? If not, think of someone in your life – and we all have them – who is continually complaining about how they aren't to blame for what's going on and that it's always someone else's fault. The victim doesn't take responsibility.

The Dream of the Planet

Many look at people and the world around us and think, “Wow, that's crazy! Who'd ever think that? What the hell do they think they're doing, anyway? That's just wrong!” While we, of course, are absolutely sane. It's a function of our Parasite to be right, right? So, of course it's going to tell us that we're sane in the midst of all the craziness.

But, who decides what rational, sound, sensible and mentally healthy actually mean? John C. Lilly, M.D., for one, coined a phrase that I find describes our *ideas* of 'sane' clearly: *Human Consensus Reality*. That's right, human consensus reality. This means that a group of humans agree on what's right and what's not and that becomes the bar for both reality and sanity.

Human consensus reality, with all of its vagaries and inconsistencies, is what Toltecs call the 'Dream of the Planet'. The Dream of the Planet in the United States (also known as 'The American Dream') has been that: you went to school, made good grades, got a good job, married a good person, had good kids, bought a good car and house, had credit card bills and a mortgage and worked hard all of your life to pay for it all until you retired and then you could relax and do everything you didn't have time to do while you worked so hard. Whew! People that didn't conform to the American Dream were considered odd-balls, eccentrics or radicals to be suspicious of, pitied or rejected.

How They All Play Together

All of these aspects of our strange but real brains find the sandbox called 'us' a delight. We're so very responsive! We get emotional! We react! We believe our poo and then we actually *act* on it!

The very act of responding and acting keeps our Parasite alive and fully in control. Practice makes permanent, yes? The rules are written. The Judge jumps on us at the slightest transgression. The Vic-

tim exclaims in self-defense that it isn't our fault. Disaster mind keeps the horrors alive for us. The dreams fall short, fear gets engaged and our strings get jerked, over and over **again**.

Thankfully, well trained coaches are prepared to help us work it all out!

Some photos of Teo!

