

#### **4 demons I have known**

This includes four statements by four clients of mine in 1987. When I began to identify the personality structure of the demon I discovered that some people upon reading these statements could identify with them. Others simply did not. Some would say, "How do you know about that part?" So originally it was simply a way to make a diagnosis. However they also show important features of the demon and how it can interact with the therapist and the therapeutic process. Most often it is disruptive to the process of therapy. Most often therapists deal with its damage in a counter therapeutic fashion.

In addition to these statements by clients I wrote an article on the demon sub personality. Often when I re-read something that I wrote so many years ago I cringe. Unfortunately this one is no exception and I think "OMG how could I have said that, that is just so out dated or that is put very poorly", and so forth. Oh well, such is life!

Eric Berne originally wrote about the demon in the book 'What do you say after you say hello'.

He stated, "The demon is the jester in human existence and the joker in psychotherapy.... No matter how well the therapist plans his psychotherapy, the patient always has the upper hand. At the point when the therapist thinks he has the four aces, Jeder plays his joker, and the demon wins the pot. Then he skips merrily off, leaving the doctor to leaf through the deck trying to figure out what happened. Even if he is ready for it, there may be little he can do..... The demon first appears in the high chair, when Jeder scatters his food on the floor with a merry glint, waiting to see what his parents will do. If they make friends with it, it will go onto later mischief, and then perhaps into humorous fun and jokes. If they beat it down, it will lurk surlily in the background, ready to leap out at an unguarded moment and scramble his life as it originally scrambled his food." (Pp 122 - 123).

Not all clients have a demon part as is described in their personality. I have never sought to work out the numbers in the clients that I have seen but I would expect it to be a small minority of clients.

#### **NUMBER 1**

What does she look like

She is small and ugly in a demanding sort of way. She has her hair down over her eyes - peeping out from under and shaking it all over when she wants to hide or tease. The body is not significant, it is just small. The biggest bit is the head. She watches out from under her hair with a sneaky, teasing look and then shakes her hair over her face and backs off when she needs to.

Where does she hang out

She lives way down in the bottom in the pit of my stomach. Lying in wait to spring out at any time - and often I am not sure if she is going to or not. She sits right down in the bottomest corner on her knees by herself

What does she think, feel, do and want?

She reacts or just acts, rather than thinks about things, but how she chooses what and where to, I do not understand. I know she must think, but it seems more like she just is. She knows people are not to be trusted, and she proves it. She knows she hates being touched. She knows things without thinking. She just leaps out and I often do not know when it happens. I do not know the why of things, just what is.

What she feels

She hates to be called a 'woman', she reacts to that. When touched she feels burnt - the feelings are intense. This is a hard question - when thinking about what she feels I am confused or blank. I see a lot of screaming and screaming, jumping up and down and head shaking - a lot of triumphant laughter and glee. A feeling of enormous energy and strength of will. She feels intense hatred and a terror which results in screaming and screaming with head shaking. She feels triumphant and gleeful; "Ha, Ha". She feels wary

What does she do and say?

This is the bit that is the problem - what she does or says. She lies quiet in the pit of my stomach, then leaps out and shatters the peace, and I can not control it. She screams and screams and jumps up and down shaking its head, until I feel like I will explode if I do not take notice. She's unpredictable, sometimes when I expect her she lies still. I know she is there ever watchful and wary. And then later when I start to trust, believe and relax a little, she leaps out twice as bad. She says, "Watch out kid, you'll go - he will get you - go on be a pain - he does not really care - listen to me - do not let him touch you - you do not need him - just get up and go". She starts shaking her head when anyone gets near, just to keep them at a distance. Even when still, I know she's just waiting for a chance to break something into pieces.

She repeats herself over and over - demanding but persuasive: "Come on just turn the wheel a little, just see what it is like to drive into the bridge, it will only take a slight turn of the wheel, and, Pow!. Go on, I dare you. Come on we don't need anyone - go on, it will feel really good - its the only way - do it and see what happens - it wont take long".

She is very hard to resist. She does this in many ways. All the time changing from peering out from underneath her hair, to jumping up and down with frenzied glee. "Keep him away, keep him away, you do not need him, do not touch me, he cannot help you, I will show you that". It's hard not to listen and believe. It has got away from me before. I know I have even started to go. I am not aware sometimes, I just turn-off and suddenly there is laughter and screaming. It is like it controls me.

I have to keep moving sometimes to keep her from taking over or exploding. I sometimes get lost and all I feel and hear is this screaming and shaking. She pushes me all the time. Gives me a shove - "go on".

What does she want?

She wants to be left alone, not to be stroked or touched - to either survive or not on her own. She wants to be triumphant and have excitement. She wants people to keep away unless she can manage them, so they do not get anywhere near her. She is desperate to win. I don't know why, its just an intense feeling of, "keep away and stay in front".

What does she think about therapy and therapists?

Therapists are fair game and fun, until they are smart, and then their is trouble. They are something to pit your wits against, to win over, even if they ever know. She has a grudging respect when they are quick to spot her moves, and when they think fast and are smart. She reacts with glee, sometimes with triumph and has a fine old time. Other times, when he gets too near, she gets desperate and resorts to other stuff - either then or later. She then feels bad.

Therapy is a game - some stuff to do with the therapist, it is an intense way to sharpen you up. Sometimes it's a threat now and she explodes with avengence just when I am starting to trust or believe. If things go wrong she is absolutely gleeful. She jumps up and down, and says, "Told you so kid, now what you going to do, huh?". Physical type therapy, such as holding, she hates. Sometimes she lies quiet but at other times she forces me to keep moving. She leaps out some-times and screams and screams until I feel as if I have been bashed.

What does she think about answering these questions?

She loves it and hates it. She loves talking about herself. But she did not like it at all when you gave her someone else's information. That was a real insult. So she's wary about how you are going to treat this. Because you can take it or leave it, she does not give a damn. But she likes the fact that she is recognised.

I think she does not like some of the things I have said because I get confused. I cannot spell or write legibly every now and again. And she wants to scribble over some bits.

She is most active when I have been vulnerable.

She wants you to know she does not want anything or need anything.

## NUMBER 2

What does she look like and where does she hang out?

He is sitting on the floor in a largely bare room with no carpet or furniture. He has his legs crossed, arms crossed, and his jaw is very firmly clenched. He is bent slightly forward with his head pulled down in his shoulders. He emanates absolute defiance and rebellion, and scans the environment for any possible danger. People come and go in and out of the room. Most of them are insignificant, but occasionally one gets through his barrier and that is very dangerous.

What does he think, feel, do and want?

He is very, very angry, but it is very controlled. He wants to hurt others some-times, but he would never do that physically. He likes watching others get hurt in movies like the ones about the Nazi's. I also think he wants to love someone but he would never admit it. He feels cheated out of a safe childhood and he's angry about that. He has a very hard, cold, conscienceless streak in him, that is of a mercenary nature. He thinks a great deal and prides himself on being able to see what's below the surface of people. He knows that he is exceptionally bright but would never say it.

One the surface, none of this shows whatsoever. He is nice and caring, and fun. If you get on the wrong side of him, watch out, because in the end he will get

you back. He would do this in a very subtle manner however, so even the person who he got back would not be consciously aware that he's been got.

On the other side he is very fragile, scared and vulnerable. He wants caring so much, but it would take ages for him to ever let anyone do it. He puts himself down and thinks he is bad and should be destroyed at times.

What does she think about therapy and therapists?

Therapists are good to play with. He feels that many have all and nice intentions, but they are really not much chop. They can be seduced into thinking the right things, so they are never in control of the situation. The great majority of them are limited by their therapy because they have to follow the guidelines. This is a sign of weakness. He has been out-gunned and confronted a few times, and this he greatly respects. Someone who can outwit him and will stand up to him is greatly respected but this has occurred very rarely.

He likes the attention that he gets in groups, and he likes the opportunity to let out feeling. Most of the time however, the therapist is not good enough to give him what he really needs.

What does she think about answering these questions?

he likes answering these questions because he likes others to know how tough, uncaring and cunning he is. It's funny, but he would never have done this without anonymity. Only to a very select few would he ever own up. The unfortunate thing about answering these questions is that he feels as though he has been dragged across the coals. There is a lot of pain in him and when he's brought up some of this, the pain surfaces. He is worried that you will tell people who he is.

### NUMBER 3

He is small and lives in a cave by himself. At the front of the cave is a shield with little slits in it that he can look out of and no-one can look in. He sees people out there, and sometimes wants to go out but he never would. He feels detached, and I call him "X", the unknown quantity.

He feels at once very frightened and at the same time very angry. He feels a lot of hatred to himself, other people and sometimes his parents. A sense of helplessness seems to overwhelm him. He feels that he is bad and in fact is being punished.

He would like to lead a varied and adventurous life, but it seems as if life is not meant to be like that. It is dull and conservative. Now he is completely alone with memories of his own mistakes and the happiest part of his life is gone. In pursuing what he thought to be the right way to live he has wasted and thrown away his potential for living. In fact, he has sentenced himself to die. He just lacks the courage to carry it out.

He does not know what his own nature is and has no interest in being part of humanity. Yet because he is, he is still liable to human emotions and weaknesses which he finds hard to control but wants to ignore. Life has passed him by whilst he was playing and he now has nothing and can see nothing to alleviate this.

### NUMBER 4

What does she look like?

She is tall, long limbed and attractive. Her hair is shoulder length and it falls seductively across her left eye.

Where does she hang out?

In consciousness she is in a forest filled with trees which have mostly lost their leaves. There are a few leaves hanging hopelessly to some branches. It is cold. She is cold; and moves quickly partly out of fear of what may be hiding there, partly to get warm to know she's alive.

What does he think, feel, do and want?

She is constantly calculating, watching all movement, thinking what these movements might mean. She feels scared and ready to run and worries if she'll go in the right direction to please you, so she'll survive. She'd like to rest and relax and wants company.

What does she think about therapy and therapists?

Therapy is scary so it seems necessary to please, to get it right to survive like all scary things, yet this is the only chance, if I can hang on long enough so he'll prove to be OK, then I can trust and change and know other ways.

Therapists may be out to trick you into something while you're not looking. So she watches for a long time. Some therapists are safe.

What does she think about answering these questions?

She thinks she'll be heard, but she'll wait and see. She doesn't want this to be edited, this is how it is. She wants her power in this and that extends further than that too.

Berne, E. 1972. What Do You Say After You Say Hello? Bantam: New York.