

24. Nice People

(Are most people truly nice?)

I'm compelled to use Judo on people, namely philosophical judo. If you're attacked, you must defend yourself. Here, my perspective is under attack, a viewpoint in a dispute over whether most people are nice or not. Predictably, most people believe most people are nice. Is this circular reasoning, or should so-called pessimists change their viewpoint? Though niceness can be subjective we can reach a logical conclusion.

First, most people could not have been nice in America when slavery existed. Although only two percent of people owned slaves, most people tolerated the practice. Slavery gave the South a huge advantage because plantation slaves were extremely useful for southern horticulture, while the industrialized northern "rust belt" didn't benefit. The subsequent wealth Confederate "sun belt" states acquired from slavery gave them power to succeed. And since the North had slaves themselves only fifty years prior, we can assume that northerners generally opposed southerners to maintain power, not out of compassion for slaves. Though American slavery is now illegal, tobacco companies are now big businesses. Many financially profit from cigarettes, which enslave users to addiction. This maintains cash crops, causes millions of premature deaths, and destroys people's health. Others approve by allowing tobacco to be legal.

Most people are polite and nonviolent. This satisfies most people's definition of nice since most people have sizable families. With their calendars filled and needs satisfied, simple politeness and nonviolence is all they expect of society. However, those with unsatisfied needs often believe that most people aren't nice. People who believe that society is nice express disapproval toward those disgruntled people instead of addressing their needs, labeling them negative, paranoid, et cetera. That's like a wolf wearing hippie beads and flashing a peace sign to a rabbit, saying "Don't be negative and paranoid. That's dangerous thinking." Instead, consider that one hundred percent of people I didn't know who rang the doorbell, sent mail, or phoned me only wanted money. Often, nobody extends themselves socially to a neighbor.

On the show *What Would You Do?* actors improvised various troubling scenarios. Often, one actor subjected another to ferocious verbal abuse in public. People made faces but said nothing. Sometimes actors publicly collapsed. Again, most people wouldn't stop to offer assistance. In an airport scene, two actors convincingly portrayed themselves as airplane pilots getting extremely drunk. They loudly announced their plan to pilot an airplane in fifteen minutes. Nobody reprimanded or reported them. One man said "I'm glad I'm not on that flight." Moreover, there are a thousand documented cases in which nobody helps someone in a crisis, or only one from a crowd helps. And according to *What Would You Do* only 1 in 5 wallets are returned, implying that 80% of people are crooks or completely uncaring.¹

Per Christian scripture, John the Baptist and Jesus considered their contemporaries "a generation of vipers" (extremely dangerous venomous snakes)-Matthew 3:7; Matthew 12:34. Paraphrasing Jesus of Nazareth in Matthew 7:13-14: "Many take the highway to destruction (universally understood as Hell) and few find life (universally understood as Heaven). Declaring that most people are nice either implies that God will damn many nice people, or Jesus of Nazareth didn't know what He was talking about. The Apostle John concluded "The whole world lieth in wickedness"-I John 5:19.

If someone makes people feel wonderful, yet there's one person whom he dislikes, so he murders him, is he a nice person, or a murderer? Moreover, do we respect others, except one or two people whom we hate or won't forgive? Christ equated hate with murder and said that those who won't forgive won't be forgiven. Jesus, referring to benevolent and social acts said "Inasmuch as you failed to serve the least, you've failed to serve Me;" food for thought. For an even lower estimation of humanity by an Atheist, see the video: *Humanity is Overrated*.²

Nietzsche-ism

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was a famous existentialist philosopher. Despite some good ideas, his philosophy culminated in glorifying the overlord or “superman” and the ruthless will to power. Nietzsche’s goal opposed those prescribed by traditional ethical and religious systems. Whatever is available to dominate others becomes an instrument. “The weak, mediocre, timid, and sickly, realizing their incapacity for satisfying achievement, band together and set up standards glorifying humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, and love, traits that protect their weakness and make for their common safety. These traits are idealized as virtues, which indicate slave morality, the will of the inferior.” In Nietzsche’s morality “good” and “evil” are relative.³

In the latter “morality”, virtues are regarded as qualities that empower the overlord. According to Nietzsche, “slave morality” (Christian morality) which glorifies mediocrity, should be maintained and encouraged for inferiors. “It is disastrous only when natural masters permit themselves to be imposed upon by it, forfeiting their birthright of absolute self-determination.” Nietzsche famously conveyed his belief that Christianity’s God cannot exist because claimants to Christianity disprove His existence by their hypocrisy; they’ve “killed him.”⁴ Nietzsche was right to attack hypocrisy, but his solution wasn’t restoring Christian morality, but expunging it altogether.

Society reflects a duality of both Nietzsche’s selfish system and the hypocrisy he condemned, instead of a compassionate value system. If space aliens visited, not knowing what anyone professed to believe but simply observed humanity’s interactions, what would be their conclusion? The philosophical 1960’s television show *My Favorite Martian* lightheartedly explores this scenario.⁵

Movies and Books

I’ve been blessed and I’m thankful for my blessings. Many people’s problems are worse. However, without wealthy parents, I probably would have died young or would have nothing. I relate to characters who have obvious differences which separate them from others. Therefore I recommend the following must see movies. Seven are fictional, but brilliantly depict what would happen given the circumstances. Eight movies ended disastrously for one or more characters, all reflecting true life.

The Elephant Man movie and book factually document what happened to someone physically deformed and handicapped.^(6,7) *Powder* imaginatively postulates an intelligence extreme (those of highest intelligence suffer ostracism), physical differences, differences in upbringing, and ideological differences.⁽⁸⁾ *The Sixth Sense* superbly illustrates the psychiatric community and society at large refusing to acknowledge unfamiliar spiritual realities no matter what anyone says and damning people as mentally ill or freaks.⁹

Lost and Delirious, loosely based on Susan Swan’s book *The Wives of Bath* is an excellent illustration of what happens to nonconformists without a family.^(10,11) Paulie, having only one friend, no family, and losing her only love, quotes *Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra* Act 4 Scene 15: “... shall I abide in this dull world, which in thy absence is no better than a sty?”⁽¹²⁾ before committing suicide. Mary Bradford commented: “I was almost swallowed up in darkness like Paulie, but I had you” (speaking to her mother’s spirit).

Million Dollar Baby finely illustrates what happens when someone is poor, has an unsupportive family, and becomes paralyzed.⁽¹³⁾ *Of Mice and Men*, based on John Steinbeck’s novel, does a great job portraying several different social issues.⁽¹⁴⁾ *Charly*, based on Daniel Keyes’s *Flowers for Algernon*, and *Slingblade* are excellent portraits of mentally handicapped men’s lives.¹⁵⁻¹⁷

Not Like Everyone Else factually documents a modern witch hunt pitting Brandi Blackbear against her entire school. Her parents acquired some semblance of justice by hiring lawyers. However, the movie dis-

torted the facts, making her persecutors devout Christians and she a non-Christian. Actually, both parties were very marginally Christian; only Brandi was curious about paganism and they weren't. And despite the positive outcome of the movie *Ben X* a tragic outcome is the norm for such youths as the film explains. Moreover, I am Brandi Blackbear and I am Ben X.18,19

View these movies and their accompanying books through the eyes of those unique characters suffering negation, absorbing this material until you become these characters and see life from their perspective, retraining your thinking if necessary. The character's severe reactions to their circumstances shouldn't be imitated, since if Jesus Christ were in identical circumstances, He'd persevere with His sterling character perfectly intact. However, these stories accurately portray the average person's reaction given the circumstances.

Again, referencing *Powder*, the protagonist, an albino with a lightening conducive body, telekinesis, and the world's highest intelligence lived in seclusion but must now face society. Witnessing the slow death of a wounded deer, "Powder" simultaneously grabs the hunter's hand and deer's paw, causing the hunter to feel the deer's pain. After hearing of this incident, his science teacher stated "If you think that's bad, there's much worse. You have a mind that we won't evolve to for thousands of years. You're the man of the future... we're stumbling around in a very dark age just trying not to kill each other." After constant exploitation and abuse, a lightning bolt strikes Powder, pulling him into a different plane of existence.

De-evolution

Most people believe that we've evolved from "primates." Evolving means markedly improving over one's predecessor. Yet if humans have improved over primates, why are there locks on every door, window, and school and work locker, car alarms, burglar alarms, half of homes having firearms for self-defense, others having knives or clubs, security guards in many businesses, security cameras in most stores and security cameras atop telephone poles? Even with those precautions, there are big police forces, court systems, prison systems, and countless lawyers.

Even with elaborate systems to curtail and punish wrongdoers, each year in America there are fifteen thousand people murdered, a million cars stolen, ninety thousand people raped, a million robberies and assaults, two and a half million burglaries and seven million thefts.(20) Though most people don't do such things, the number of people who are culpable should be tripled. That's because everyone's two parents are responsible for raising them properly. Multiplying that tripled figure by how many others would do such things if they knew they wouldn't get caught equals society's criminal element. Let's also add those who know about crimes but don't report them, shirking their civic responsibility.

We have "evolved", so instead of dropping harmless bananas for others to step on, we have twenty-five million landmines to step on. If only other "primates" embraced our Utopian standard. Besides, if abortion is murder like anti-abortionists claim, and most people support abortion, then most people support murder. See 26.Social Lunacy under The Youngest. Murder certainly isn't nice. Even if abortion isn't killing, since "fetuses" supposedly aren't conscious, most unconscious comatose patients are kept alive on machines against their wishes. That reveals that it's not really a matter of consciousness; rather, money is made from every abortion performed and every patient kept on artificial machinery. There's even a book called *Why We Love Sociopaths*. (21) Do apes love sociopaths?

The Milgram Experiment

In 1961 professor Stanley Milgram designed and filmed a psychological experiment which tested conscience. Here, two unrelated people arrived at a laboratory to participate in an experiment advertised as a memory and learning exercise. The experimenter explained that the study concerned "the effect of punishment on learning." One person designated "the learner" entered another room and sat down. The learner's arms were bound tightly

and electrodes were attached. Supposedly he had to learn a list of word pairs. Whenever he made a mistake, he was to get shocked; with each mistake the shock should increase.

The other person was told to be the teacher. After seeing the learner strapped in and wired for shock, the teacher was taken to a different room having a “shock generator.” The “generator” had switches labeled from 15 to 450 volts in increasing increments and also labeled with descriptions: SLIGHT SHOCK to DANGER-SEVERE SHOCK. Thirty volts might be okay if it does not pass across the chest. But the higher voltages (electrical outlets range from 110-240 volts) would be extremely dangerous.

The teacher took the word list and was told to test the learner. If the learner answered correctly, the teacher simply read the next question. When the learner made a mistake, the teacher was told to switch on the electricity, beginning at the lowest shock level and increasing the shock increment each time.

The learner was an actor who didn't receive any shocks, but the teacher didn't know this. After the actor failed to learn some word pairs, the voltage rose, where he expressed considerable pain. At 120 volts, the learner shouted that the shocks were becoming exceedingly painful. At 150 volts, the learner demanded to be released from the experiment. As the voltage increased, the learner complained fervently, where at 285 volts, he screamed in agony. Yet the experimenter coaxed the teacher to continue regardless.

This procedure was repeated forty times with forty different adult teachers with various education levels and backgrounds. The result? Thirty-four subjects continued to shock the learner even after he demanded to be released from the experiment. Twenty-five never disobeyed the experimenter and continued to press the switches up to 450 volts. Professor Milgram repeated his experiment using forty women teachers, yet their performance was virtually identical. This experiment was repeated at other locations, eventually involving over a thousand subjects. Results remained constant.(22-25) Conclusively, social pressure short-circuits most people's conscience.

Perspectives

For the extremely different, such as John Merrick (“the elephant man”) where women would scream and run after merely seeing him, or someone severely handicapped personality-wise, whom people quickly judge and become infuriated with, positive thinking alone isn't enough. Positive thinking is necessary, but we mustn't abuse that principle by being purblind to injustices such as people losing their eyesight and limbs from stepping on one of the twenty-five million landmines planted worldwide. (26) As for the cliché about the glass and attitudes, the glass is positively half full, not empty. However, someone may attempt to drive across a bridge that is halfway completed across a canyon. Half can be woefully inadequate.

Most handicapped men understand that society is not designed to help them, it is designed to weed them out. Their having faith in humanity would be foolish. Thankfully, my religion does not ask me to have faith in humanity, only faith in God. Some people declare that dwelling on negativity breeds negativity. I agree, if one wants to complain without trying to work towards solving problems. However, we shouldn't keep our heads immersed in sand like cartoon ostriches. There's a third position: by acknowledging that our world is degenerate, we can actively work to improve it.

Life seems nice if you're stepping on others, not if you're being stepped on. A woman tried to catch a train, but slipped and twisted an ankle. Others literally stepped on her, breaking her leg while everyone else rushed past. She felt humanity's true impact. The platitude of “nice society” was created by the socially satiated, who had big supportive families, and didn't interact outside their immediate family. Contrarily, big city police officers, who interact with the greatest quantity and diversity of humanity know more truth, consequently they are very distrustful. For an eye-opening experience, interact with as many people as you can, refraining from any type of flattery or telling them what they want to hear; speaking only the truth and saying exactly how you feel without holding back.

The following fable illustrates society's hidden and true motives: A lion once fell in love with the daughter of a ploughman and asked for her hand in marriage. Not wanting to either give his daughter to a fer-

ocious beast or refuse the lion because he feared him so much, the ploughman thought up an idea: As the lion continued to press him, he told him that he deemed him worthy to be his daughter's husband, but should only give her to him on one condition, that he would pull out his teeth and claws, for they frightened the girl. The lion willingly resigned himself to this great sacrifice because he loved her. But, no sooner had he done this than the ploughman had nothing but contempt for him and, when he presented himself, drove him away with vicious blows.-----paraphrase: Aesops' fable: The Amorous Lion and the Ploughman.27

Most people think you're nice if you always display proper etiquette. Yet these systems reward slick and slippery people and harm simple, yet kindhearted people, who have difficulty following these rules. I would end etiquette, which is a Modernist religion which diverts attention from the rules by which the Lord Jesus Christ defined people as nice, in His "New Testament."

Oftentimes nobody is sufficiently nice, in that lifetime friendship is unattainable for many. Suppose you went to God's Heaven for twenty years. Then God moved away, or allowed someone else to disrupt your friendship with Him, so you had to go to Hell. For someone without a family, society's antisocial construct is completely unacceptable.

Christians to the Rescue???

Although most people don't care about others, thank God for dedicated Christians. They fight the evils of abortion, speaking for those who cannot speak themselves. They produce many children to fill Mother Earth. They follow Christ's injunction of feeding, clothing, and sheltering the poor. They fight physician assisted suicide to prolong the lives of our dear elderly people. They're polite and kind. They're even progressive; Christian politicians speak of colonizing the moon.

Yet anti-religion has increased by over a hundred percent. What might cause that? Here are some possible answers: Although Christian believers tackle some issues, they do nothing to help fellow believers find good jobs and nothing to help them find nice housing.

"Christians" do nothing to help others enjoy a pleasant surrounding environment and absolutely nothing to help them acquire adequate health insurance. Is their failure as bad as unbelievers? No, "Christians" are generally worse; they support politicians who promote unrestrained oil drilling and strip mining which destroys the environment, and who fight against universal healthcare.

"Christians" promote world peace by their words, but their actions speak louder. "Christians" are more likely to be pro-war than unbelievers, unlike members of the earliest Church who were conscientious objectors. "Christians" do absolutely nothing to promote friendship among fellow believers. Is their failure as bad as unbelievers? No, it's worse. Churches are among the least likely places to find friends; some believers denounce "the social Gospel."

"Christians" do absolutely nothing to help single Christian men find wives while some single "Christian" women hide behind religion to avoid the pressure to marry; others reject fellow believers while marrying non-believers for money. Is the failure of "Christians" as bad as unbelievers? No, "Christians" are worse; churches are among the least likely places to find a wife.

No matter which church group, they all fail. Now concerning the issues that "Christians" do address: Their promoting the quantity of life infringes on life's quality. More people equals more starvation, disease, wars, environmental destruction, and cramped unpleasant conditions. Life's quality and quantity have always been at odds.

When caring for the poor, doesn't that feed one's ego, by catching others in their lowest moments, packing them like sardines in a mildewed flophouse, and being able to control them like pets? When fighting assisted suicide, proponents deny the right to die to those who want to die; they force their view on others as if they are superior beings.

And doesn't parenting the mentally and physically incompetent stroke one's ego? When being polite and kind, can this come from cowardice; feigned politeness to avoid potential violence? And many would much rather have been aborted than live to a hundred alone on the moon.

Jesus didn't focus on people's physical or personal concerns because His pressing mission was the salvation of souls. However, He left His disciples with the injunction of following the Golden Rule, which would fully address these issues. And non-Christians of all stripes have decided that the vast majority of "Christians" aren't worth spit. So what is our response; arrogant denial or humble repentance?

There's an axiom: Most people believe what they want to believe. And most religious people believe that most people will be tortured in Hell for all eternity. So perhaps many WANT others to be tortured in Hell for all eternity: rampant sadism.

Don't think that I oppose Christianity; I'm a devout Christian. But it's like panning for gold; mounds of sludge accompany every gold nugget. Christianity attracts those who cannot deal with life nor the reality of death, so using religion as a crutch for broken personalities, crooks who wear pious masks, moochers, and the self-righteously arrogant. So I call upon fellow Christians to either personally repent or expose these malignant elements.

Conclusion

Living in a world that relegates honest, hardworking, intelligent, handsome men in great shape to minimum wage jobs picking up human waste and rotting carcasses (as in India), or mouse droppings and used Kleenex (my former jobs), prevents them from having a fine wife or family, and shuns them like lepers, while idolizing sociopaths who use deceptive flattery, exposes society as diabolical. If most people are nice, then elephants are a special type of hummingbird.

From Bishop Fulton Sheen's book *Your Life is Worth Living*: It will make no difference to God if we were hated by the world; Judgment won't be based on our social position, but on how we lived, the choices we made, the things we loved.(28) Bishop Sheen implied that people hate or dislike others without rational reasons. We cannot use the excuse that people receive meanness or ostracism because it's their fault; far from it. Nice guys finish last.

I quote verbatim Sir Anthony Hopkins commenting on *The Rite* in which he starred: "The [movie] priest's modus operandi is to keep moving forward, fighting the good fight of faith. His philosophy is life is difficult; life is NOT fair; life is savage; the world is a savage place; life is offensive so you keep going with all the best intentions in your heart, since once you give up on that, you may as well be dead."(29) Thankfully, God is niceness personified; having faith in Him will not disappoint. "The last shall be first" (Matthew 19:30, Mark 10:31, Luke 13:30).



