

Rethinking “Evil”

Editor’s Pick. Written by Scott Noelle.

If you watch the news (not recommended) you see people committing despicable acts of violence, and the general consensus is that these people who do evil... *are* evil.

Ironically, when you have decided that someone is evil, bad, or wrong, it’s easy to justify doing evil things to them. “An eye for an eye” makes everyone blind.

All this evildoing perpetuates the false belief that humans are inherently evil and would behave badly if not for our prohibitive laws and the constant threat of punishment.

In truth, humans are *social* animals, which means we’re evolved for connection, cooperation, bonding, and love. But we’re also evolved to kill our food, defend our kin, and feel anger when our autonomy is threatened.

In other words, aggression is a part of our nature that’s supposed to be aimed at our prey, our predators, and our challenges — not each other.

When we become violent toward each other, it doesn’t mean we’re evil, it means we’re *confused* and have we lost touch with our amazing capacity to create harmony.

Improve Your Groove

Today, whenever you feel interpersonal tension, conflict, or disconnection, notice that you are somehow judging the other person to be wrong, inadequate, threatening, or otherwise “bad.” (You may be judging yourself, too.)

Entertain a new thought:

They’re not “bad,” they’re confused. They’ve lost touch with Who They Really Are: powerful, free, creative human beings who would choose harmony if they could see a path to it.

How does this thought affect the way you respond to these people?

Originally posted in Scott’s *Daily Groove* email newsletter.