

# Existential Dysphoria

Existential dysphoria needs to be taken as seriously as gender dysphoria. The number of people with atheistic or existential issues is higher than the number of gender conflicted individuals.

Existential dysphoria is a form of dysphoria about the meaning of your existence and how your identity fits in.

Existential dysphoria is present,

- your sense of being your own person to the exclusion of any god or God is not affirmed when it could be and is an inborn trait

- when your identity as your own creation and nobody else's is not affirmed. If atheism is true then you are your own maker.

- when you feel that whether it is true or false, you are self-made and no God had an input and this feeling is central to what you are about. Its not a choice that you feel that way.

- society in a sense puts you in the wrong body or existence by seeing you as a child of God when you know you are not

- when relating to others means seeing them as persons that no invisible person or force is looking after or can look after

- when being in a religious society or culture creates distress and a sense of being erased or not listened to

- when you are oppressed by being forced or pressured to go along with religious ideas

- when you may have a high level of logical ability and see through religious claims and this is not affirmed

- if you are on the autistic spectrum your ability and experience may be strictly logical so if religion is nonsense and God untrue or makes no sense you will see it

- if there is a God and you need a relationship with him and don't interact with God or godly things/people then that is a form of autism. Religion then cannot be presented to you without abusing you.

- God belief can trigger obsessive compulsive disorder for it is this perfect being always measuring you

- Depression can often be a case where you feel alone in the universe - feel the absence as in non-existence of a higher power: fighting that feeling makes things worse, atheists with that feeling can live through it victoriously

*Deeper examination of existential dysphoria and autism*

Aoife Dooley of YourOneNikita on Twitter says,

In the autism community, many self-advocates and their allies prefer terminology such as 'autistic,' 'autistic person,' or 'autistic individual' because we understand autism as an inherent part of an individual's identity. But often parents of autistic people prefer terminology such as 'person with autism,' because they do not consider autism to be part of an individual's identity.

To that I insist on saying that if you don't see your autism or some other trait as an inherent part of who you are and what you are, you still may see it as fundamental and basic to your experience. In practice that as good as makes it an inherent part of your identity. Your experience can be as deep as your identity if not deeper.

Autism features significantly in many people with gender or existential dysphoria.

Gender dysphoria can be helped in many people when they accept that their bodies belong to them and not to any God. Defiance of how nature has given you a body that is not right for your mind and brain can be liberating and assertive. Atheism then can be the undercurrent of their therapy.

There are many autistic children who have a bigger problem with their anxiety levels than their autism - Ozsvadjian, Knott, & Magiati, 2012.

Studies show that about 40% of autistic children/adolescents are diagnosed with one or more anxiety disorders - Van Steennel, Bögels, & Perrin, 2011. The number is actually much higher for in many cases a diagnosis is not achievable. Some slip in and out of anxiety which makes clarity impossible. Some try to not declare it. All autistic people however are at risk of anxiety. A person with an anxiety disorder is at risk of having one or more in time.

Autism inflicts an inability to fit in a situation where communication is required and the other problems of the disorder and the anxiety add to the isolation.

An unmoving concern about details and a rigid approach to life and fear of change and inability to adapt guarantees that an atheist person will suffer. Change will traumatise that person.

Autistic persons can react to pain and change with far more pain than is normal because their awareness is over-acute.

An autistic person's anxiety can and will be triggered by certain people. It does not matter if those people are people or imagined people such as God or angels. What matters is what is real to them.

God is seen as about communication for that is what prayer is for. It communicates your relationship with God and his with you. Prayer is talking to God and can we expect an autistic person to do that or say it is a duty to?

God is seen as that which makes demands and that by default has to unsettle a person with autism who needs to make their own choices because they are their own choices. God's power is seen as a threat to the stability that an autistic person needs in their mind and in their life and environment for he can intervene and change things. God is in control of what is around the autistic person not the person.

### *Moral injury*

Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini talk about moral injury - the pain that doing anything immoral does to you as a spiritual anguish. For them moral injury means "souls in anguish" but is "not a psychological disorder." It is characterised by how you feel less human and worthy of being human after you violate your moral inclinations and ethical beliefs in a grave manner or a perceived grave manner. People can torment themselves for having forgotten Sunday worship.

We fail to see how pain can be considered to be in the soul. It registers in your body and mind. Doctors will find the physical and emotional evidence. If you feel less than human that does not mean you are less than human. The soul must be lying then. Moral injury if those experts (? is that what they are?) is the soul abusing you! Either the soul or the idea that you have one and imagine you have one is doing that! It is cruel to blame a soul for that if the person is only emotionally damaged for as the soul cannot be seen the diagnosis is impossible.

What is moral injury doing in an article about existential dysphoria? If God comes first then the reason certain actions make you feel inhuman and useless and vile is because they drive home how grave they are as violations of morality. In fact it makes sense for any "sin" to do that for it is attacking God regardless of how it does not look that damaging otherwise. The damaging harm is obviously and shamelessly nasty and totally obnoxious but it does not have to be obvious to do that. Murder is murder whether it looks gory or looks like an act of mercy. It should not matter what it looks like. It should not need to be stomach churning to show what it is.

So faith in God is INDIRECTLY going to damage you should you find it is not for you. Existential dysphoria needs to be prevented and treated by protecting vulnerable people from faith.

An autistic person may feel they are somehow not their body but outside of it

### *God faith devalues the person who suffers, especially the person with autism*

Pain, suffering and change are likely to be worse for an autistic person than anybody else. Their response and stress are inherently heightened. Suppose you are autistic. Thus suffering or pain is unlikely to be seen as a gift from God to train you. They are seen as an attack on you. Suffering would need to be seen as it is to train you. Perceiving it was worse or experiencing it as worse than what it is is definitely an attack on you. The autistic person or the person with existential dysphoria is being abused by the religious doctrine that evil is a problem and that God is the solution.

The idea that you create yourself by your actions and don't have a fixed human nature is non-Christian. Original sin says you have a nature that is set in a damaged way and can only be modified if not corrected fully. Existential dysphoria can be rapid onset so this oppressive doctrine must be severely rejected.

Dangers – depression, a sense of being victimised, suicidal feelings, anxiety ...

Solution – your experience needs to be affirmed and this will help you grow and thrive in society

Consequences of existential dysphoria and the erasure of the victims -

The suicide rate among autistic people with existential dysphoria is high. And the suicide rate among atheists is high anyway and this must be put down to dysphoria in many cases. Society is responsible for the alarming level as is how therapists seem ill-equipped to help with the existential dysphoria condition. It must be recognised that many people are poorly diagnosed or miss diagnosis.

Requirements:

No influencing or imposing of a religious identity on a baby or child - no baptising.

No inserting of a child into a religion saturated context such as a faith school etc.

Children need to be aware from infancy that it is okay to hate the God concept and see yourself as owning all you do and that it has nothing to do with God.

Affirmation of non-religious people and celebration of non-religious beliefs.

## APPENDIX

Could so-called demonic possession be a form of existential dysphoria?

In cases of demonic possession, the victim seems to have a new personality that has taken over. It rages against God. It talks stupid. It tortures the person physically and in every way it can. There is no evidence that the entity is really a demon or whatever. The entity will talk stupid and the horror film type antics hardly ever happen. Exorcists even claim that the work is boring. If the possession is really down to existential dysphoria then the treatment is affirming the patient in their atheism or sense of the absence of God. Exorcism is abuse. This fits how it takes years for exorcisms to work and if the demons come back exorcists try to make out the person let them back in.