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Disinhibited Thoughts #8

Last time, I talked about how if a TS'er wants the luxury of not telling people about his/her TS in the workplace, then there are natural consequences to that. The realization that the hole one finds oneself in is self-dug might hopefully prompt him/her to think more about disclosing to others.

Another workplace question I've been asked is whether TS'ers have a better opportunity exploring occupations that lend themselves to self-employment. From watching those that I know, and from what I've heard reported by others, it would seem that we tend to go to one of two extremes. Some TS'ers start their own businesses and thrive in that independence. Others find themselves as teens drawn to Air Cadets and the Militia, and eventually surrender almost ALL independence by joining the service. Last week an adult TS'er who had served told me that only recently has anyone (a chaplain, actually) officially come "out of the closet" and openly admitted their TS.

I don't believe there is a "right" direction.....the path you take is guided by personal preference. However I DO believe both directions are in response to the poor control or regulation we have over ourselves (our poor inhibitory controls). Let's address self-employment first. Myself, I thrive for independence. I have come to realize that I can achieve any ENDS I desire so long as I have flexibility in the MEANS for getting there. Hence the role of graduate student is a perfect one for me.....no one cares HOW or WHEN or for HOW LONG I work on WHAT, as long as I meet the requirements of the degree within the allotted time. No one looks over my shoulder and demands that I work at a particular time, or on only one thing at a time, or that I stay with one task until its complete, or that I shift to the next task at a particular time. Hence I ride my waves, I work in the way my brain was DESIGNED to work, and I excel. This has been made very clear to me at times when I have taken summer jobs where there was very little freedom or flexibility in the MEANS to accomplishing a task. Doctor-to-be or not, "grunt" job or not, each time I failed dismally.

On the other hand, joining the army gives you very little of this precious flexibility I speak of, yet many TS'ers thrive there as well. Why? It is a very controlling environment, and self-control (over movements, attention, thoughts, etc.) is the crucial element that we lack neurologically. Thus, in a very real sense the service allows us to compensate for what we weren't given genetically – it acts as a "surrogate frontal lobe" telling us exactly when to do what, how to do it and for how long. Left to your own devices you are unable to regulate yourself, and so you voluntarily adopt someone else's devices to get you blissfully on track.

Now that I think about it, this discussion mirrors the Expression or Suppression choice I speak of frequently in my presentations. If you want to express who you are, you must find an environment that will allow you to explore how you can best work. If you want to suppress the differences, you must find an environment that best substitutes that which you are lacking.

Until next time, my friends!

Duncan
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