Twitter Thread by Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych



Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych
@Nick_Carmody

The, “how do we fix this” is perhaps the most important question we face as a country. To the extent that it can be fixed, it starts with framing and language used to describe the problem/solution. The “deprogramming” and “brainwashed” verbiage has to be eliminated. 1/

> Great analysis. Now, what do we do about it. Do we need to \u2018reprogram\u2019 minds of those who\u2019ve fallen into a veil of deception? Do we treat these folks as cult victims? When it is a group narcissism, folks have to \u2018kill off\u2019 a part of themselves to escape, not easy recovery.
>
> — Ponder (@Washyourowndish) April 23, 2021

No one is receptive to finding “common ground” when the starting point of the person who claims to desire common ground is telling them they’ve been brainwashed, and that they need to be “deprogrammed”. 2/

This plays into the “Totalitarian” narrative that Tucker Carlson is propagating, even going so far as using the “don’t believe your own eyes” to reinforce the narrative. 3/



Of course, this is exactly what occurred during Trump's presidency. Basically, it's another attempt to confuse and distract with moral/false equivalency. 4/ https://t.co/3ewhEnJkkD

In the past, the Right attempted to excuse Trump's pathological dishonesty with allegations of the Left lying: if everyone is lying, then no one is lying……because lying is normalized. 5/https://t.co/wVkFSbgg1y

> ...or 2), a combination of: everything is a lie, therefore nothing is a lie\u2026.that lying is a necessary tactic to win or to compete against evil enemies (Libs/media) who are lying,\u2026or that they\u2019re in a Darwinian fight for survival where lying is a law of the political jungle.13/
>
> — Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) July 6, 2019

With Carlson's characterization of the Left being "Totalitarian", it's essentially an attempt to frame it ("it" being the Right's fascism) as: "If everyone is authoritarian, then no one is authoritarian"….because authoritarianism will become normalized. 6/https://t.co/pdAHxZu1G1

> That tone in Tucker's voice when he says "that's so well put...." is Carlson having an epiphany that Kelly just provided him justification/talking points for running a fascist campaign for president in 2024/2028.
>
> The classic narcissistic/sociopathic, "you made me do this"... 1/ https://t.co/ZU2JPFOaOD
>
> — Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) March 26, 2021

Since the Right no longer believes it can compete in a democratic process, this creates self-granted permission to win by "any means necessary" in the newly framed, zero-sum, fascism-vs-totalitarian world where the Right clearly feels more competent. 7/https://t.co/ABU24A4TAL

> When people no longer believe they can compete or \u201cwin\u201d within the context of a specific \u201cgame\u201d, they either choose to stop playing\u2026..or in extreme cases, may even "up-end the game board" and scatter playing pieces everywhere. This is what the GOP is doing to democracy. 1/ https://t.co/V1izQSsxRG
>
> — Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) November 13, 2019

In my observation, people drawn to conservative ideology tend to have less cognitive flexibility, and struggle with or are less comfortable dealing with abstraction, nuance, "gray areas", or with grasping/accepting multiple complex explanations for a complicated problem. 8/

In previous writings, I've described this predisposition to think in absolute, either/or terms as having a "binary orientation". 9/https://t.co/wknXjlMP9W

> People who possess a \u201cbinary orientation\u201d often struggle or are uncomfortable w/abstraction, & will steam roll over nuance\u2026if they recognize it at all. This is an important point in a global political climate that is trending towards fascism/tyranny. 32/ https://t.co/bnMvdBFRvR
>
> — Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) August 12, 2019

People who are binary-oriented tend to see the world through the lens of polarity (polarization), and therefore are either unable or unwilling to see the "gray areas" of life or issues.

This makes them less willing to compromise or change their position on issues. 10/

Couple this with the fact that they exist in a completely different informational ecosystem that not only constantly promotes binary, "Us-vs-Them" narratives, but also....11/

....provides positive reinforcement through bias-confirming narratives that affirms that they're correct/justified in what they believe, and promotes moral superiority for believing it (which has parallels to the white supremacist themes). 12/

Essentially, these narratives put the Right's political beliefs beyond reapproach because they are morally reinforced. This tactic works especially well with the highly religious because it aligns with their embrace/defense of their faith, which is also beyond reapproach. 13/

The soothing affirmation of their beliefs simultaneously exists alongside a persecution/victimhood narrative that implies that any disagreement, challenge, or attempt to enforce societal norms, or even codified laws, is an attempt to marginalize, "cancel", or "replace" them. 14/

When Tucker Carlson repeatedly tells his audience to:

"Remember that when they come for you, and they will...."

This causes even the slightest challenge, disagreement, or criticism to immediately trigger their "binary orientation"…..

15/

….which not only places the person engaging them (even if it’s a loved one) into an Us-vs-Them, ally-or-enemy, context…

....but it also inhibits their ability to process moderate, compromising solutions to difficult societal issues and problems. 16/

As a result, "background checks" are cognitively equated with abolishing the 2nd Amendment....

...prohibiting hate speech or insurrectional incitements are equated to silencing “conservative” viewpoints, etc.

It’s all or nothing.

17/

Circling back to the question of how to “fix this” on a societal level, it would appear that it needs to be “treated” as if it were an individual problem because….18/

….many of the same psychological processes and cognitive distortions/dysfunction that play out on the societal stage, are often what are identified and worked on in an individual one-on-one therapy session. 19/

In a one-on-one context, when the client is having relationship issues, the work can focus on creating awareness of and improving and/or mitigating cognitive processes, defense mechanisms, conflict resolution skills, & seeing the conflict from their loved one's perspective. 20/

The client can then practice implementing these skills into their personal life and relationships.

But in the case of the political climate, even if there is progress/growth/healing on an individual level,…

21/

…as soon as they engage the political informational ecosystem, their pathologies are affirmed/validated, & they're told that anyone who tells them otherwise (family/friend…“therapist”) is trying to manipulate/control them.

It’s a very difficult (impossible?) situation to fix.

Other relevant threads: 23/ https://t.co/wId97OT74Q

> I\u2019ve used a \u201ccircuit breaker\u201d analogy to explain why some people revert to not just their previous position when confronted with potentially moderating information about both sides of an issue, but to an even more extreme position than they held before hearing both side. 10/
>
> — Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) February 6, 2021

Other relevant threads: https://t.co/B2toaIwrLY

Fear is a major factor in the Us-vs-Them dynamic. Fear organizes. Fear controls. Fear motivates. Another factor is that people often define themselves by their enemies. 1/ https://t.co/Ndu1nEXRyw @rory20s @HarveySlave pic.twitter.com/Yj1HXoGXnf

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) August 12, 2019

https://t.co/fL5620cOwe

Coulter, Hannity, Rush, etc., are "media authoritarians" who manipulate and indoctrinate their authoritarian followers by convincing them that they alone can inform them, they alone tell the truth, they alone can prevent the political and informational apocalypse.....1/

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) March 2, 2019

https://t.co/72xCn5oyjD

The reaction to Chauvin's trial is not only another data point in the Right\u2019s "secession" from the rule of law, it highlights underlying psychological dysfunction:

The Right is projecting.

Let\u2019s examine their "secession\u201d, & the recent incidents of Right Wing \u201cmob justice\u201d. 1/ https://t.co/ui1jcrEiFf

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) April 22, 2021

https://t.co/0PVU6Dd4BY

In the past, the political discourse consisted of two opposing philosophies/ideologies disagreeing over the interpretation of one set of facts. But in the current \u201cfake news\u201d/"alternative facts""post truth"/anti-intellectual honesty climate,.....1/2

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) November 2, 2018

https://t.co/U8itielh0k

.....the two opposing ideologies are operating from two different sets of facts. The former (one set of facts) was extremely challenging\u2026\u2026\u2026the latter is damn near impossible, and a recipe for disaster. 2/2

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) November 2, 2018

https://t.co/mLqmFMRSg2

There's a disconnect in their cognition that inhibits internal/logical consistency. They react to nearly every event "in a vacuum", independent of any other data point, issue, or argument.

That reaction in nearly every situation is oppositional defiance. The byproduct: hypocrisy https://t.co/3IoUj5n2P3

— Nick Carmody JD, MS Psych (@Nick_Carmody) April 24, 2021