YOUNG MACHIAVELLIANS AND THE TRACES OF SHAME: COPING WITH VULNERABILITY TO A TOXIC AFFECT

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INTRODUCTION

In Patrick Susskind's novel *Perfume*, the protagonist, Grenouille, is able to concoct fragrances that overwhelm those inhaling them with a sense of the fragile beauty of lost innocence. Liberally using perfume in this way he brings to control even a crowd who, seconds before, would have killed him; they halt their attack and revere him. Ironies abound: he himself has no smell, yet (or perhaps because of this) he is able to control others through a sensory realm he does not participate in himself; to create this perfume evocative of lost innocence required that he murder many young innocents (the reason for the crowd's rage) (Susskind, 2001).

Machiavellians do not inhabit the realm of emotion in the same way as others, yet they use it to manipulate others. They do not experience feelings, empathy, or morality in normative ways (Leary, Knight& Barnes, 1986), yet they are consummate manipulators and deceivers precisely by playing upon these sentiments and convictions in others. Thus they induce in others the guilt they hardly feel themselves (Vangelisti**,** Daly &

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Rudnick, 1991). In these ways they can bypass detection by authorities (Hawley, 2003), win in short-term exchanges with others and even gain a kind of popularity (Cillessen & Rose, 2005; de Bruyn & Cillessen, 2006). What influences contribute to such a personality style? What are some of the costs to self and other incurred as a result of Machiavellian practices? Is there need or means to remedy these costs?

My central thesis is that part of what makes a Mach is reliance on unskilled means of coping with shame. Rather than suffer it as a persistent fact of life, they attempt to externalize shame, once and for all, attempting in this way to bypass the felt effects of shame. In a nutshell I suggest that trying to handle shame in this way alienates a Mach from others and from parts of him or herself. Alienation undermines a Mach's social integration: trying to bypass shame fragments his or her personality, undermining personal integrity. The literature attests to Machs' ability to deceive others. They use their skills in self-presentation and their ability to bypass empathy (McIlwain, 2003) in ways adaptive to getting their own needs met. It seems that others are not completely convinced by the socially sculpted image Machs present in that they are not seen as desirable friends (Novgorodoff, 1974), but have allies and popularity of a sort (Hawley, 2003). They are careful to use relatively indirect aggression and manipulation of resources to achieve a kind of adaptation to social circumstances. There are costs to this, to the group and to the Machiavellian themselves. I present evidence suggesting that Machiavellians do not however achieve full *self*-deception, however, since there are traces of their suffering, which I portray as traces of shame. There are few direct signs of shame in Machs because they bypass it in their various ways of coping with it. We have to infer that it is there. It's quite common to bypass shame, whereby not only the person him or herself, but a clinician may not know it is operative. I take Resnick (1997)'s suggestion very seriously that the notion of 'hidden shame' is dangerous in that it accords a lot of power to the clinician who suggests that shame is there but not recognised. However, there are empirical signs indicative of shame having been bypassed or defended against. To hold bypassed shame as an hypothesis rather than a conclusion guides further research rather than closing off possibilities. Lastly, I suggest possible avenues of remediation using role-playing, parent-inclusive interventions and addressing the internalised self-views that promote a vicious cycle of shame experiences. These interventions take as focal point the traces of shame that can be found in the Machiavellian personality. I highlight two such traces of shame: the alienation and the psychological partitions that arise from not being able to cope with this powerful affect.

MACHIAVELLIAN ATTRIBUTES

Machiavellians famously have the 'cool syndrome' (Christie and Geis, 1965). Adult Machs are less able to discern and identify their inner states (Wastell & Booth, 2003), and/or more able to inhibit the experience and expression of emotion (McHoskey, 1997). As children and adults they certainly report less empathy with the feelings of others (Braginsky, 1970; Barnett & Thompson, 1985; Watson, Biderman, & Sawrie, 1994). This relative absence of hot empathy means they are able callously to use others for their self-serving aims (McIlwain, 2003). Because they use indirect relational aggression or aggress against those unlikely to challenge them, they sustain a popular image of themselves. They are evolutionarily adaptive, perhaps. Research certainly shows them as capable of taking control of resources, using relational aggression (Hawley, 2003) as a way of getting loyalty from allies where they cannot quite get love (Cillessen & Rose, 2005) , and retaining social power despite the fallout of their cold and unempathic ways (Hawley, 2003).

Recent work shows young Machiavellians to be highly invested in resource control. Machiavellians use others to advance their own goals, to the detriment of some and to the advantage of their allies. Their anti-social and manipulative behaviours do not necessarily result in ostracism and marginalization (de Bruyn & Cillessen, 2006). They may be perceived to be popular and effective in managing resources. Their social skills mean that their forms of aggression may not be visible to adult observers (Hawley, 2003, p. 284). Hawley's (2003) research shows them to be capable of hiding their aggressive tactics from teachers (though they have no trouble identifying in themselves a high level of aggression, hostility and a willingness to cheat; and this view is backed up by peer-report). They are strategic in selecting those against whom they aggress. To echo Buss & Duntley's (2008) work, they possess many adaptations for exploitation, manipulating social hierarchies and showing preferential selection for out-group victims. Hawley's work suggests they reserve their (indirect) relational aggression for those in out-groups or former members of the in-group. Such use of aggression may enhance their visibility, status, and a certain form of consensual popularity, making them 'charming bullies' (Hawley, 2003, p.623).

Their strategic versatility sits well with their portrayal as evolutionarily adaptive. Hawley & Vaughn's (2003) view of adaptation includes "aggressive behavior [that] is working well (i.e. adaptive) for some individuals in that personal goals are attained at relatively little personal or interpersonal cost" (p.240). This may seem plausible if adaptation is viewed only from the perspective of the individual Machiavellian and his/her allies; it is true that they seem to have a high self-concept and high levels of positive affect, and are charming enough for their tactics not to cost them all their associates. Yet,

it seems clear that there are serious interpersonal costs and wider social costs: the anguish of the victims of their aggression represents an interpersonal cost. Hawley (2003, p. 302) herself cites the example given by Talbot (2002) whereby relationally aggressive girls can manipulate intervention programs to revictimize their target and improve their own social status. Hawley notes: "such manipulation suggests that they are well aware of the sensitivities of their victims and the importance/vulnerability of their victims' social contacts" (p. 302). This knowing manipulation of others is a kind of 'hitting them where it hurts' socially and is a form of intentional harm that makes it aggressive in nature. Yet, she suggests, they also show behaviour that is classified as "consistent with nurturance" (p.301): giving as examples that they are extrinsically motivated to pursue relationships for power and popularity but are also equally motivated to pursue them for "pleasure and self-fulfillment" (Hawley 2003, p. 301). It is important to acknowledge that these goals are still highly self-focused; while that is not inconsistent with nurturance, it is not evidence of it. Paal & Bereczkei (2007) found that Machiavellians are significantly low on cooperativeness, favour self-serving advantage over compassion, are socially disinterested rather than empathic, and are socially intolerant rather than accepting (p. 547).

There are costs if the wider community is considered. There is research which highlights these costs: adult Machiavellians have been found to be dishonest (Ashton, Lee & Son, 2000) and Machiavellianism has been found to be negatively associated with the intrinsic goals of community ($p<.0001$) and family ($p<.05$) (McHoskey, 1999). Gurtman's (1992) analysis of the interpersonal problems experienced by adult Machs indicate an arrogant, narcissistic and domineering stance, with his circumplex analysis showing that they are 'hostile distrusters' marked by a coldness or indifference to others – a stance McHoskey (1999) suggests is antithetical to social interest (which entails transcending egoistic concerns to demonstrate care and concern for others). McHoskey (1999) found that Machiavellianism is negatively associated with social interest ($r = -.57$, $p<.001$), and significantly positively associated with six forms of alienation: nihilism, social isolation, powerlessness, normlessness, cultural estrangement and self-estrangement. Alienation accounts for 37% of the variance in Mach scores (McHoskey, 1999, p. 279).

Machiavellianism is not merely characterised by disengaged alienation however, it is also linked in adults with manifest hostility (Wrightsman, 1991, Palatano, 1997). Young male Machs' interpersonal relations towards women may be particularly fraught in that evidence suggests connections for young men between the deceit component of Machiavellianism and a preference for graphic horror with female victims. They prefer female victims even if such horror is lighter in level of violence than the violence on offer against men (Tamborini, Stiff & Zillman, 1987). Tamborini, Stiff & Zillman found that the Machiavellian subscale of deceit was the strongest predictor of preference for graphic horror among all the measures of personality. Their research

underscores 'the relationship of deceit with a desire to violate the norms of socially acceptable behaviour or to see them violated by others.' (p. 548).

Machs have a robustly external attribution of control and this particularly relates to "a tendency to externalise blame specifically" (McHoskey, Worzel & Syarto 1998, p.197) Machs deflect agency, ascribing causality to forces external to themselves (Mudrack, 1990). I suggest that the external attribution bias that consistently characterises Machs may be a trace of shame, an attempt to 'pass the buck' for responsibility regarding actions that, at some level, they sense would draw social censure. It is part of their tendency to bypass shame by not taking responsibility for their actions towards others. As Braginsky (1970) showed, young Machiavellian girls spontaneously laid responsibility at the feet of the experimenter for the task of having their peers eat bad-tasting quinine-soaked biscuits. Blame was laid on powerful others rather than on them; the little girls took care to 'save face' before the other whom they manipulated, indicative perhaps of shame.

This unwillingness to admit to personal failings is also a characteristic of narcissistically inclined people (McWilliams & Lependorf, 1990) who show a marked unwillingness to apologise or to thank others as a way of shoring up a grandiose vision of themselves as being without sin and without need. Machs are also grandiose (McHoskey et al., 1998). Sherry, Hewitt, Besser, Flett & Klein, (2006) "found that high Machs defensively present themselves as self-sufficient, strong and capable, while they conceal expressions of imperfections, vulnerability and weakness" (p. 831). Adult Machs, intriguingly, will not play dumb, even where this is the optimal strategy for success (Shepperd & Socherman, 1997). This inability even to appear dumb is a chink in the mask of the Mach – a revealing rigidity in their otherwise flexible array of strategies. Adept at deceiving others and putting on a charming, persuasive mask, they are not entirely fooled about themselves; they don't fully self-deceive. An inability to play dumb suggests a nagging vulnerability and shame.

Machiavellians view others as deserving of the cynical contempt they feel towards them and deserving of the Machiavellian's exploitation of them. Such exploitation is effected frequently by tactics of flattery appealing to their vanity and self-seeking tendencies (McIlwain, 2003). The cynical worldview endorsed by Machs develops later than the skilled behavioural manipulation and distrust (McIlwain, 2003). One feature of schemas and worldviews is that they are belief structures representing sedimented guides for action; habitual ways of explaining events, and ascribing causal responsibility. The cynical and hostile worldview and interlinked repertoire of exploitative tactics of Machiavellians are ways of preventing a Mach from ever inadvertently trusting and being exploited or hurt. Such a worldview also deals with any residual tendency to feel bad about exploiting others. The Machiavellian worldview may be, among other things, a sedimented trace of attempts to cope with shame.

PARENTING STYLES AND SHAME-PRONE PERSONALITY FORMATION

Stuewig & McCloskey (2005), in a longitudinal study (which does not rely on recollections of early parental behaviour, but on descriptions of current behaviour) using path analysis, found a significant pathway between harsh parenting at time one and parental rejection at time two, which related significantly and positively with shame proneness and negatively with guilt-proneness measured concurrently (at time two), (p. 331). They conclude: "harsh parenting in childhood was positively related to criticizing, rejecting and shaming behaviour by the parents toward the adolescents and negatively associated with warm receptive behavior by the parents. This parental rejection during adolescence was, in turn, linked to a higher, shame-prone emotional style." (p. 333). They note that "a warm, supportive family environment devoid of rejection and harsh criticism may encourage adolescents to take responsibility for transgressions without generalising the negative feelings to the entire self" (p. 334).

There are intriguing links between studies of the parenting styles that promote shame-prone personalities and the recollections of early parenting styles and Machiavellianism. Ojha (2007) found that rejection figured in the recollections of parenting behaviours of the more Machiavellian of the 300 young men in their sample between 16 and 18 years old. They asked the young men to recollect parental behaviours towards them at 12 years of age. Machiavellian orientation was significantly related to restrictive (rather than permissive) and rejecting (rather than loving) behaviours from both parents. Ojha suggested that the relationship between Machiavellianism and recollections of rejecting behaviour was stronger in regards to the mother's behaviour. It seems possible that Machiavellians have not had enough positive, personally validating intersubjective exchanges to develop adaptive schemas about self, other and world (Warburton & McIlwain, 2005), which, along with self-compassion (Neff, 2003) might permit them to handle shame skillfully, rather than attack other, withdraw or avoid.

Machs as has been established above, do not take responsibility for their actions, have a robust external attributional style (Mudrack, 1990; Wilson, Near & Miller, 1996) and are adroit at externalising blame. Avoiding or bypassing the experience and expression of shame can prevent it from being personally and socially acknowledged, but it may nonetheless have behavioural consequences. These include indirect consequences via its exacerbation of anger and promotion of hostility as Bennett et al, (2005) suggest, and consequences for distortion in how self and other are viewed (Claesson, Birgegard & Sohlberg, 2007).

ATTEMPTING TO BYPASS SHAME : A MAJOR DETERMINANT OF MACH PERSONALITY

Those with a Machiavellian personality style have experienced a less than optimal early parental environment which resulted in their lack of a compassionate self-image, losing trust in others. They have developed deceit which is a form of withdrawal and hiding and which makes them able to avoid criticism, humiliation and rejection in the short term. However, if one is caught in a deceit, these consequences will be experienced in a more magnified form. Further, deception leaves them without real closeness to others and to community despite a reputation for popularity. They have developed an attributional style which deflects shame but leaves them with a sense of others as hostile and untrustworthy. Such a picture is consonant with the suggestion made by Claesson et al, (2007) that there are distortions in views of self and other when shame is unconsciously activated.

I have described research into the developmental environments which promote a shame-prone person, linking those features to the small amount of research exploring early experiences and parental treatment of Machiavellians during adolescence. I have shown that shame can be a transient emotion or it can come to be a personality disposition which leaves the person sensitive to self-relevant and status-relevant cues. This sensitivity makes dealing with shame doubly hard. In a shame-prone personality, the induction of shame promotes extreme discomfort which leaves two broad traces: 1) alienation from others which may entail high self-monitoring and the development of a social mask to deceive others as to one's true state and 2) fragmentation or splitting of one's personality via the development of psychic partitions which results in an attribution outwards of the locus of badness. Rather than tolerate shame long enough to get the personal message regarding the implications of their behaviour for who they feel themselves to be as a person, shame is swiftly bypassed, and it is others who are seen as malevolent, callous and worthy of exploitation. Shame can alienate us from others and from parts of ourselves, Gollum-like, diminishing the integrity of our personality. In short shame can promote both social alienation and psychological fragmentation.

Alienation from others and withdrawal from others may occur behaviourally as in adopting a reclusive existence. As a brief aside, Hunter, Gerbing and Boster (1982) suggest from an analysis of the pattern of errors they found in their cluster analysis of the components of Machiavellianism and other personality variables, that they were able to infer a variable, which they called 'variable X' that would have made sense of the error data (pp.1303-1304). They suggest that a candidate for that variable X is living a monastic life, where cynicism may be rejected. It is possible that it is as a result of not being able to adopt a withdrawn, monastic existence that Machiavellian attributes like cynicism and the belief that

others are immoral arise. Psychological alienation can arise from the desire to hide one's shame for fear of humiliation, as well as from hostile distrust. It can lead to the development of a cynical and hostile worldview whereby one copes with shame via downward comparisons, and by distortion, defensively derogating others which makes everyone else seem as bad as one feels oneself to be.

The ability to split what one seems to be from what one is requires the development of social masks. To be truly effective at this, it is best if the person self-deceives as well and comes to truly believe that the mask they show to others represents the totality of the personality. Evidence suggests that Machiavellians do not achieve full self-deception, as they suffer. From the nature of the popularity they accrue, it seems that others are not completely convinced either. They achieve a kind of notoriety rather than true sociometric popularity (Cillessen & Rose, 2005). Hawley's work suggests that the use of indirect aggression and skilled manipulation of resources enables them to continue to exploit and deceive without ostracism. There are costs to this, to the group and to the Machiavellian themselves. I suggest possible avenues of remediation which takes as its focal point the experience of shame, the alienation and the partitions that arise from that.

TRACES OF SHAME : ALIENATION

To summarise my argument briefly; I suggest Machs are characterised by various forms of alienation, and that alienation is an extreme attempt to cope with shame. I suggest that Machs have attempted, via alienation of a behavioural and psychological sort, to eliminate their experience of shame.

Research cited above establishes links between Machiavellianism and six forms of alienation, Mach's arrogant, narcissistic and domineering stance, their profile as 'hostile distrusters' marked by a coldness or indifference to others. They are remarkably low on values of community and family, are low on cooperativeness and honesty, favour self-serving advantage over compassion, are socially disinterested rather than empathic, and are socially intolerant rather than accepting. Male Machs have a preference for consuming media that portrays violence against women. Such attributes are evidence of alienation, and I suggest, traces of suboptimal attempts to cope with shame. They are forms of attack and withdrawal at a psychological and a behavioural level Attempting to cope with shame can occur via attacking others; projecting negative attributes onto others, harshly judging those one fears may find one inadequate or lacking, or 'getting in first' with exploitation and indirect aggression. Coping with shame can also promote suboptimal ways of making sense of human transactions, as it can also shape the worldviews we develop. For instance, downward comparison to alleviate feelings of shame may result in a rather dim view of other humans.

Machiavellian personalities are characterised by a lack of trust, cynicism, and a capacity for deceit. McIlwain (2003) notes that Machs 'split being and seeming' - expression and experience can come apart. They have split what they seem to be to others, from what they are. I suggest that such social partitioning is an attempt to deal with shame – and it quite literally, undermines personal integrity. Such a person is not 'as good as their word'. Underlying much of the morality and tactics of the Machiavellian is the belief that it is not necessarily a good thing to be transparent about your intentions, or to give real reasons for your actions to others. Machiavellians turn a mask to the social world and seem to have affectively disengaged from others and community.

The second trace of Shame: Fragmentation

Shame may also promote a fragmentation of personality. In external shame, in an attempt to avoid the experience of being shamed by others, one can partition what one truly thinks from what one expresses to others - the social sculpting motivated by self-presentational concerns. However, when one has internalised shame as described so ably by Resnick (1997) (where the child not only introjects the values and norms of the other, he/she also introjects the other's disapproval and perhaps contempt and disgust for him) attempts to cope with this shame can also lead to self-deception, as Claesson et al (2007) have observed.

This is the variant of shame that historically has been the hallmark of narcissism. It can make it difficult for a person to access his or her own memories and desires; as, when shamed, there are parts of experience no longer readily avowed even to oneself and parts that one can come habitually to ignore in oneself so frequently that they may become chronically inaccessible to our conscious awareness. This is what psychoanalytically-inflected writers like Winnicott (1964) and Miller (1981/1983) have called a split arising between the false self and the true self, or what has been referred to in the research literature on narcissism as the grandiose self protecting the vulnerable self (Lichtenberg & Slap, 1973; Masterson & Rinsely, 1975; Akhtar & Thompson, 1982; Watson & Biderman, 1993; McWilliams, 1994; Wink, 1991). While there are many theoretical reasons to avoid reifying the self in exploring these phenomena, the vivid image of a split self works as an heuristic. In personality styles where there are 'sedimented partitions', that is ongoing, habitual, readily sustained habits of not accessing certain aversive material, the mask that protects vulnerable features of oneself may be a slightly grandiose, anti-social one. It seems that a little grandiosity is preferable to the painful experience of what it permits one to bypass. I suggest that despite the seemingly mercurial nature of young Machs, there is a signature and stable array of things aversive to them that they are not willing to risk experiencing: trust, transparency of aims and ideals to others, playing dumb, vulnerability to the power

of others, and the hope for kind treatment. This surface grandiosity and defended vulnerability suggests to me that there is a narcissistic core to Machs.

Empirical psychological research has found overlap and distinguishing features among the dark triad of Narcissism, Machiavellianism and Psychopathy (McHoskey, 1995; McHoskey, Worzel & Szyarto, 1998; Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Jacobwitz & Egan, 2005). The statistical overlap reliably found suggests that rather than viewing these as completely distinct styles just because they are assessed by different scales, it might be helpful to explore the commonalities. To do this it is most fruitful if we think of narcissism as something that is in part assessed by the many scales researchers use to tap the parameters, but also something for which there are clinical markers. Looking at narcissism in this way points to what may be developmentally shared experiences that contribute narcissistic features to Machs and Psychopaths. Narcissistic features that spring to mind are a lack of trust of others, a tendency to wear masks of grandiosity to protect covert features of the personality which might otherwise attract censure or cause shame if seen, a lack of empathy which permits a self-serving approach to life, a capacity for skilful manipulation of others, and difficulties in dealing with shame.

Many of the attributes of the Machiavellian personality style are a function of not being able to handle shame – since, I suggest, like narcissists, they did not have the warm accepting, positive interchanges required to sustain trust, form a robust sense of self and develop the affectively resonating features of theory of mind and empathy (McIlwain, 2008). While Machiavellians have an intact theory of mind (Paal & Bereczkei, 2007), by referring to the affective features of theory of mind, I mean to include not only knowing that others are separate and have cognitions of their own, but having a resonating awareness of others as beings with feelings, desires and intentions. Machs are able to use others against the interests of that other and cynically to see them as likely to do the same. It is possible that they deal with shame by bypassing it and by developing a hostile worldview, which enables them selectively to see the worst in others and to project onto others the contempt and disgust felt towards themselves as a result of not having been fully loved for who they are. In this way, handling shame poorly alienates a person from others, and further undermines integrity of the personality, since there are (shameful) feelings about oneself and parts of personal experience that are routinely avoided.

Being unable to cope well with shame can lead to deceiving others and ourselves, to social withdrawal and affective disinvestment in others, to hiding behind a mask in a sense of splendid alienation, tinged, in the case of Machs with contempt. They have a cynical view of those who they feel would intrude, disappoint, humiliatingly expose their weaknesses and judge

them harshly. Having a hostile attribution bias may render threat cues salient and mean that one acts in accordance with motivations ascribed to others. In this way hostility may actually bring about negative exchanges. Add to that an external attributional bias, where very little is deemed by the person to be their responsibility or fault; where little responsibility is taken for one's actions and one has a personality recipe that causes suffering. There is, perhaps, suffering for the Machiavellian person and threat to those nearby.

Remediation: whose suffering would it address?

Machiavellians pose interesting questions for me: Do they suffer? Do we want to remediate because of their possible suffering or because we think they are a threat to us? A further challenge is: how does one intervene and remediate? I suggest here that the way towards remediation hinges on understanding the narcissistic core to Machiavellianism, specifically the traces of shame that mark the personality and why shame has marked them so.

Do they suffer? It seems so. External attribution, ascribing causality to fate, chance and powerful others may mean that nothing is ever one's fault but it also entails a loss of a sense of agency. McHoskey and colleagues (1999) found Machiavellianism to be correlated with powerlessness. Machiavellians themselves may further suffer socially, since evidence suggests that few people wish to draw into close relationships with them (Wilson, Near & Miller, 1998) and only high Machiavellian women preferred high Machiavellian men as romantic partners in Novgorodoff's (1974) study. Indeed high Mach women may be avoiding genuine intimacy by being open to forming bonds with high Mach men.

I suggest that there are sedimented partitions in the Machiavellian personality that have arisen as a result of shame. To promote personality changes, I suggest that what we can modestly aim for is to get; 1) movable partitions, or to get the person to 'lower them occasionally', to be able to 'peer over them' – to come to countenance experiencing and tolerating the experience of something about themselves that is vulnerable and perceived as weak; reclaiming the experience of aspects of their uniqueness or aspirations that had no place, or inadequate positive recognition in their family of origin; 2) a more flexible repertoire of coping skills in dealing with negative emotions, particularly their own internalised shame, than externalising blame, cynical exploitation of and indirect aggression towards others; 3) a preparedness to shed the habitual mask; to be seen and found, to stand up and be counted socially for what one believes and endorses, and 4) (what will feel at first) a risky willingness to trust and hope. Does this translate into practical technique?

PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH MACHIAVELLIANS

Attempts at remediation at a skill-based level have been fraught in allied personality styles like psychopathy, where empathy training has produced more versatile and violent recidivism (Seto & Barbaree, 1999; Rice, Harris & Cormier, 1992). This shows that attempting to remedy skills without considering the dynamic organisation of personality attributes may backfire. We need to understand what promotes the occurrence of one set of strategies rather than another. Such considerations are vital if we wish to be able to predict which contingencies and life situations are likely to bring out withdrawal or attack. They are necessary if we wish to understand and remediate.

If my portrayal of Machiavellianism as arising from suboptimal attempts to deal with shame is on track, and if the forms that shame takes depends on the developmental moment at which it arises, intervention will differ depending on at which point in the developmental trajectory intervention occurs. Prevention would be ideal, of course. And the literature on parenting styles is reasonably clear.

TARGETTING PARENTS : PREVENTION AND REMEDIATION

Stuewig & McCloskey (2005) suggest that "harsh parenting described by punitive practices such as "yelling, hitting and spanking may lead to feelings of helplessness on the part of the child" (p. 325) which may lead to globalized shame, while parental rejection, including excessive criticism and humiliation may result in persons adopting a shame-prone emotional style. Because these criticizing behaviours tend to focus on the person and not the behaviour…they may increase shame- and decrease guilt-proneness. (p. 325). They suggest that "warm and supportive behavior might encourage a child to feel appropriate guilt about a behavior but not globalize it to his or her entire sense of self (Tangney, 2002)" (Stuewig & McCloskey, 2005, p.334).

Deblinger and Runyon's (2005) research, while targeted at the more specific problem of childhood sexual abuse and the ensuing shame that may arise for children, brings to our attention the possible need to target the parents as well where a child is young. They suggest targeting shame-producing thoughts in the child through a variety of techniques as well as role-playing with the child posture, voice and gaze techniques of preventing abusive situations in the uneven power match between parent and child. They also suggest working with families to teach parents "effective, non-violent disciplining strategies and a variety of adaptive coping skills… [to] assist parents in modulating their emotions and coping with child-rearing situations

in a calm, positive manner" (p. 373). Their clinical observations are that "by the middle of treatment parents have generally already begun to effectively manage their anger, to have more realistic expectations of their children and to use positive parenting strategies…" (p. 373).

Shame is difficult to work with in anyone. It is particularly difficult to address therapeutically in adolescents where identity is in formation, where it is peers who matter and where there is distrust of adult authority. Sommers-Flanagan and Sommers-Flanagan (1995) provide a truly wonderful array of practical approaches to working with adolescents. I will only mention a few here. They note that in working with adolescents who utilize deception one needs to note that there are inherent advantages to this behavioral style that may make the individual resistant to change. Advantages they outline include an ability to a) avoid responsibility; b) maintain a sense of invulnerability; and c) enhance stimulation or excitement, (p. 136). Disadvantages of deception include: legal trouble, violations of trust in relationships, and evolution of anti-social behaviour patterns. While deception needs to be addressed, 'the process of becoming accountable for one's behaviours is stimulating or anxiety-provoking, regardless of subsequent consequences.' (p. 137). They provide us with an array of skilled ways of overcoming the way that adolescents may be skilled at 'alienating others, particularly adult authority figures' (p. 132), and suggest that therapists need to be on guard against how their own buttons might be pushed when exposed to adolescent hostility. They note that a therapist may "feel liked rejecting and abandoning the adolescent in a manner that would fulfill the adolescent's core beliefs about being unlovable and repugnant" (p 135). Citing Meeks (1980) they suggest that

> even the most repulsive and self-defeating behaviours are comprehensible. The patient needs to know that we believe deeply that there are good reasons for everything he does, even when what he does is not good for others or for himself" (Meeks, 1980, p. 33, cited in Sommers-Flannagan & Sommers-Flannagan, 1995, p. 134).

Wright (1987) also provides a note to the clinician. He suggests that challenges for the therapist include: "Beware of one's own feelings of discouragement, failure, shame and humiliation. These patients are particularly adept at producing such feelings in those who are involved with them". (p. 245).

Using a systems model Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan suggest doing a kind of one-person family therapy, promoting

changes in behaviour that will "require adjustment in the behaviour of other family members" (Szapoccznik et al, 1990, p. 698, cited in Sommers-Flanagan and Sommers-Flanagan, 1995, p. 132). They suggest an array of relationship-enhancing techniques which empower the client to participate. One technique they describe is ideal in approaching shame issues: that one begin in third person. The co-authors note that "adolescents are frequently skilled at criticizing their friends of family for interpersonal defects, while remaining blind or defensive to their own deficits" (p. 136). The transition to first person analysis is acknowledged as being difficult but they suggest that humour might help as it is complimentary to the intelligence of the client. The use of humour seems ideal as a way of allowing a person to glimpse the fact that the failings they so readily ascribe to others may be true of themselves. My only caveat is that given the Machiavellian repertoire of tactics involving flattery, I suggest that therapists might wish to avoid explicit ascriptions of intelligence to the young person as this may seem to verge on flattery.

WORKING LIGHTLY WITH THOSE WHO EXPERIENCE SHAME

Resnick (1997), working from a Gestaltist point of view, highlights vital therapeutic concerns in working with shame. He notes that 'beliefs and interpretations about shame need to be "held lightly" as the *therapist's speculation or theory* (locus in the therapist) rather than as a definition of the client's experience" (original emphasis, p. 264). There must be clear attention to process since "how and when the therapist introduces the idea of shame is pivotal" (p. 264) given power differences. Given that people with shame-proneness will find it hard to tolerate the imputation of shame which might bring the experience of it to the surface and might be shaming in itself, Resnick's suggests that "the therapist must be scrupulous in attending to the client's reception and reaction to such a presentation" (p. 264). Intellectual insight is not enough; one needs to address feelings and judgments that may be made unconsciously about self in a shame-prone client. Most importantly Resnick suggests, because in maladaptive shame one has not only introjected the values and norms of the other but also the contempt and disgust, there is a

> destructive and recursive shame loop that continues to replenish itself. Intellectually rejecting the introjected parental/societal values without dealing with the introjected contempt and disgust is of little therapeutic value….The client must discover the matrix of parental/cultural introjects below the…projections and below the anger, fear and sadness that are informing his/her cognitions, affects and sensations" (p.268).

From a cognitive behavioural perspective Deblinger and Runyon (2005) acknowledge that shame-inducing thoughts may be a direct reflection of verbal and non-verbal messages experienced by children in the context of experiencing abuse." (p.366). They make the important observation that shame-inducing thoughts can become 'increasingly ingrained, automatic and repetitive such that individuals may be completely unaware of the self-berating internal monologues that influence their daily moods and behavior" (p. 366).

THE NEED TO TOLERATE SHAME

Tolerating shame is hard. Yet this is precisely what is required if we are to deal effectively with it, and allow its message to us to be a basis for personal and moral development. More commonly what one finds is that shame promotes alienation from the collective (often accompanied by disparagement of others) and an inner fragmentation. Alienation arises if there is a discrepancy between what the collective requires and what the person is capable of; deceiving others pulls one out of the influence of the collective into a splendid and sometimes dangerous isolation. Inner fragmentation arises when, by deceiving oneself, one removes the discomfort that might promote growth and moral development. The tension between the personal views "I am like that", and "what I am like would not be tolerated by the collective" is diminished by a kind of mental plurality; what I term 'psychic partitioning'. In normal personalities, they are like partitions in an open-plan office: they can be relocated, looked over and are somewhat permeable to certain messages. Tact and diplomacy are examples of normal social partitioning, presenting a socially desirable account to others, but knowing that is not the full story. In contrast, psychic partitioning occurs when one attempts to believe in that socially desirable vision as the totality of oneself. This results perhaps in a person holding unrealistic expectations of perfection promoting painful discrepancies between what one is and what one feels the collective deems successful or worthy of aspiration. The result is that what one is becomes more remote from the ideal, and to hide this from oneself one defensively distorts views of self towards a more grandiose version. The partitions can come to wall in unacceptable parts of oneself, and filter, block or distort the importance of the reference group message in an attempt to avoid inner discomfort. That this defensive attempt to avoid inner discomfort is not completely successful is shown by the woes of being a Machiavellian: powerlessness, paranoia and shame.

Remediation must take not only the surface features of the personality into account, but the underlying variables which may be responsible for the development of the parameters of the profile.

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