

Who Killed the Wonder Child? By Alannah Dore

Do you wake up saying 'thank you god its morning' or do you say "Good god its morning!"

Picture the following scene:

A three year old blinks his eyes and registers he is awake and alive. He looks up from his bed that he has not yet grown into and sees his toy car lying on the floor from the night before. Immediate response! Joy! Jumps out of bed and starts to brrrrm it over the bed head down the leg across the floor and a big jump over his pet dog who has just wandered in to greet him. Then enough of that he feels his rumbly hungry tummy and heads out into the kitchen. Hmm no one around so after a failed attempt to wake up his reluctant riser parents his enthusiasm gets channeled into exploring the cereals in the pantry and the excitement of anticipating pouring the milk himself! It's 5 am!

Let me introduce you to the wonder child! He or she is able to elicit enormous pleasure from the most mundane experiences in life. They are optimistic, playful, joyful, willing to take risks and make mistakes – so not afraid of the possibility that the milk might not make the cereal.

What about you? How do you wake up? Enthusiastic and joyfully present to each moment you are alive? Well you are no 'Robinsons Caruso' if you groaned 'no' to that. All of us experience some form of lethargy around our daily lives to a certain extent. I call this 'Wonder Child Woes' where the wonder child is feeling woeful and is actually whoa'ed (like stopping the horse "Whoa boy!") by other factors. What's important though is how often and how severe W.C.W.'s are for you.

After supporting 1000's of people in the last 18 years and observing the statistics I agree with John Bradshaw (I call him 'King of the Inner Kids'). Millions have been stuck in a "Culturally induced hypnotic trance". A trance that subtly brainwashes and shames people into feelings associated with mild lethargy to dangerous illusions of lack of self worth, lack of self expression and the biggest one believe it or not because of its potential consequences in our life - lack of creativity.

Mild "Wonder Child Woes"

In many people, the lack of enthusiasm usually decreases as the responsibilities in life increase. It is manageable though and can be gone

with a social outing, a nurturing bubble bath or massage and a good laugh with a bunch of friends. This deadening of enthusiasm is probably the result of too much work and not enough play.

What you can do:

If you haven't all ready schedule in your next holiday even if it is 6 months time then do so now! Connect to that child part of you and have fun just by looking forward to it, reading about it talking about it with others who can share your enthusiasm with you. By joyfully anticipating your holiday even though you haven't even left yet the holiday is already working its magic. Avoid making it expensive; keep it simple, preferably nurturing and in nature. The wonder child is naturally attuned to nature. (imagine how safe our world would be if what run by healthy wonder children in big responsible adult bodies)

In the short term address the W.C.W.'s by renting a favorite comedy or children's DVD that you like. Play a game, look up jokes on the internet. Go out with someone who makes you laugh and be a leader in the fun as well.

Moderate Wonder Child Woes

The next stage of W.C.W.'s is characterized by seeking out others who are smiling less (unless artificially assisted) and taking part in negative conversations and habits more. When you notice you are turning activities and outings into negative experiences or when you are seeing more of the negatives in yourself, people and even life in general you know the wonder child has gone into hiding.

It's a catch 22 if nothing is done at this stage and often over time becomes a downward spiral where negativity seeks out negativity and the W.C.W. 's symptoms become severe. One or more symptoms can occur like poor sleep, poor general health, worry, low levels of energy or disinterest in being with fun people unless that fun is obtained with artificial assistance (like drugs/alcohol, destructive behavior/ treatment of self and others).

Relationships can be affected, when boredom breeds toxic thoughts and feelings and destructive choices that hurt rather than heal relationships. If this has not been a long term set of symptoms then you are still in the moderate category. At this point other people may begin to notice changes.

What you can do

In addition to the above suggestions, take some time out to make an appointment with yourself.

- Ask yourself the following questions.
Am I active? Am I reading positive books and articles (like this one hee hee), listening to positive shows, spending my time with positive people?

- Listen to your self talk! What's it telling you? How can you improve it?
- Find your favorite music and move – slow, fast, high or low, what ever your body wants
- Think of what you loved to do as a child and do it
- Draw with your less dominant hand aimlessly for 10 minutes

Walk in nature minimum once a week

Consider doing some wonder child work to boost your efforts either workshop or work with a “Holistic Living Counsellor”.

Severe Wonder Child Woes

The third level of the ‘W.C.W.’s does not just mean feeling down every now and then. This has become chronic the symptoms masquerading as the person. Symptoms such as lack of self esteem, hopelessness in thinking there will ever be a chance to change, acceptance of negative toxic people in their life and lack of motivation or creativity as to how to get out of this.

John Bradshaw describes some people as “congealing into their final selves” where there are no more surprises.

At its worst the wonder child is not just in hiding it actually appears to have “left the building”. Folks with this level of W.C.W. seem to only be moved out of it by a shock like a health crisis or a relationship crisis and even then some will roll over and be resigned that this is the best they can get from life.

To wake up, eat, work, sleep exist and kill the ache of the empty soul with junk food, emotionally disconnected sex, mood altering substances and entertainment that sensationalizes and dramatizes in an attempt to shock the emotions into life. To them life can seem pointless and they can often become cynics having little empathy for others let alone themselves.

Playtime requires bigger, better, more sensational toys and often disconnected from the natural world. (when in the natural world usually in a form of ‘control over’ rather than ‘one with’ the natural world.

What you can do:

Its time to look deeper. What is under these symptoms. Time to get some help. Read books, explore the internet, see a Holistic Living Counsellor (directory on website) do an inner child workshop and take time to heal your feelings. Time to come home and discover the true you underneath all those layers. If you don't examine this issue, the symptoms might just grow stronger. Its time to make some changes in your life. Study the 7 living essentials as a guide. There is soooooo much you CAN DO! Its up to you! You life is waiting!

All of us experience some form of Wonder Child Wore's from time to time.

It's how we respond that makes the difference.

At its worst our social system can restrict our ability to creatively problem solve, increasing our dependence on the 'system' and what it dictates to us. It can KILL JOY and consequently the wonder child! In its place are antidepressants, illness, loss of physical ability, relationship destruction, financial lack, neediness, longing, alcohol, drugs, blame, negative thinking, toxic foods, low energy conversations, consumerism....in a world that ultimately has free choice available to every individual.

Our potential for happiness is far greater than the media, entertainment (tongue in cheek for a good %50 of it) and advertising industries. We have so much potential to be happy in our self, health, wealth and relationships. How is your sense of joy?

The wonder child can be revived, to survive and even better thrive! Take action to turn the tide.

If healing is needed remember the child got shamed (embarrassment is a form of shame) and that's why it went into hiding so 'feel the shame and do it anyway!' Find hidden treasures of the playful, joyful, fun, carefree wonder child that can bring peace and freedom to responsibility.

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