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7 Brainwashing and the Sleeping Partner

How or why do we start smoking in the first place? To understand this fully you need to examine the powerful effect of the subconscious mind or, as I call it, the 'sleeping partner'.

We all tend to think we are intelligent, dominant human beings determining our paths through life. In fact, 99 per cent of our make-up is moulded. We are a product of the society that we are brought up in -the sort of clothes we wear, the houses we live in, our basic life patterns, even those matters on which we tend to differ, e.g. Labor or Conservative governments. It is no coincidence that Labor supporters tend to come from the working classes and Conservatives from the middle and upper classes. The subconscious is an extremely powerful influence in our lives, and even in matters of fact rather than opinion millions of people can be deluded. Before Columbus sailed round the world the majority of people knew it to be flat. Today we know it is round. If I wrote a dozen books trying to persuade you that it was fiat, I could not do it, yet how many of us have been into space to see the ball? Even if you have flown or sailed round the world, how do you know that you were not

traveling in a circle above a flat surface?

Advertising men know well the power of suggestion over the subconscious mind, hence the large posters the smoker is hit with as he drives around, the adverts in every magazine. You think they are a waste of money? That they do not persuade you to buy cigarettes? You are wrong! Try it out for yourself. Next time you go into a pub or restaurant on a cold day and your companion asks you what you are having to drink, instead of saying, 'A brandy' (or whatever), embellish it with 'Do you know what I would really enjoy today? That marvelous warm glow of a brandy.' You will find that even people who dislike brandy will join you.

From our earliest years our subconscious minds are bombarded daily with information telling us that cigarettes relax us and give us confidence and courage and that the most precious thing on this earth is a cigarette. You think I exaggerate? Whenever you see a cartoon or film or play in which people are about to be executed or shot, what is their last request? That's right, a cigarette. The impact of this does not register on our conscious minds, but the sleeping partner has time to absorb it. What the message is really saying is, 'The most precious thing on this earth, my last thought and action, will be the smoking of a cigarette.' In every war film the injured man is given a cigarette.

You think that things have changed recently? No. our children are still being bombarded by large hoardings and magazine adverts. Cigarette advertising is supposed to be banned on television nowadays, yet during peak viewing hours the world's top snooker players and darts players are seen constantly puffing away. The programmes are usually sponsored by the tobacco giants, and this is the most sinister trend of all in today's advertising: the link with sporting occasions and the jet set. Grand Prix racing cars modeled and even named after cigarette brand names or is it the other way round? There are even plugs on television nowadays depicting a naked couple sharing a cigarette in bed after having sex. The implications are obvious. How my admiration goes out to the advertisers of the small cigar, not for their motives but for the brilliance of their campaign, whereby a man is about to face death or disaster his balloon is on fire and about to crash, or the sidecar of his motorbike is about to crash into a river, or he is Columbus and his ship is about to go over the edge of the world. Not a word is spoken. Soft music plays. He lights up a cigar; a look of sheer bliss covers his face. The conscious mind may not realize that the smoker is even watching the advert, but the 'sleeping partner' is patiently digesting the obvious implications.

True, there is publicity the other way - the cancer scares, the legs being amputated, the bad-breath campaigns - but these do not actually stop people smoking. Logically they should, but the fact is they do not. They do not even prevent youngsters from starting. All the years that I remained a smoker I honestly believed that, had I known of the links between lung cancer and cigarette smoking,

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I would never have become a smoker. The truth is that it doesn't make the slightest bit of difference. The trap is the same today as when Sir Walter Raleigh fell into it. All the anti-smoking campaigns just help to add to the confusion. Even the products themselves, those lovely shining packets that lure you into trying their contents, contain a deadly warning on their sides. What smoker ever reads it, let alone brings himself to face the implications of it?

I believe that a leading cigarette manufacturer is actually using the Government Health Warning to sell its products. Many of the scenes include frightening features such as spiders, dragonflies and the Venus flytrap. The health warning is now so large and bold that the smoker cannot avoid it, however hard he tries. The pang of fear that the smoker suffers prompts an association of ideas with the glossy gold packet.

Ironically, the most powerful force in this brainwashing is the smoker himself. It is a fallacy that smokers are weak-willed and physically weak specimens. You have to be physically strong in order to cope with the poison.

This is one of the reasons why smokers refuse to accept the overwhelming statistics that prove that smoking cripples your health. Everyone knows of an Uncle Fred who smoked forty a day, never had a day's illness in his life, and lived to eighty. They refuse even to consider the hundreds of other smokers who are cut down in their prime or the fact that Uncle Fred might still be alive if he hadn't been a smoker.

If you do a small survey among your friends and colleagues, you will find that most smokers are, in fact, strong-willed people. They tend to be self-employed, business executives or in certain specialized professions, such as doctors, lawyers, policemen, teachers, salesmen, nurses, secretaries, housewives with children, etc. - in other words, anybody leading a stressful existence. The main delusion of smokers is that smoking relieves stress and tends to be associated with the dominant type, the type

that takes on responsibility and stress, and, of course, that is the type that we admire and therefore tend to copy. Another group that tends to get hooked are people in monotonous jobs because the other main reason for smoking is boredom. However, the idea that smoking relieves boredom is also an illusion, I am afraid.

The extent of the brainwashing is quite incredible. As a society we get all uptight about glue-sniffing, heroin addiction, etc. Actual deaths from glue-sniffing do not amount to ten per annum, and deaths from heroin are less than a hundred a year in this country.

There is another drug, nicotine, on which over 60 per cent of us become hooked at some time in our lives and the majority spend the rest of their lives paying for it through the nose. Most of their spare money goes on cigarettes and hundreds of thousands of people have their lives ruined every year because they became hooked. It is the No. 1 killer in society, including road accidents, fires, etc.

Why is it that we regard glue-sniffing and heroin addiction as such great evils, while the drug that we spend most of our money on and is actually killing us we used to regard a few years ago as a perfectly acceptable social habit? In recent years it has been considered a slightly unsociable habit that may injure our health but is legal and on sale in glossy packets in every newsagent, pub, club, garage and restaurant. The biggest vested interest is our own government. It makes £8,000,000,000 per year out of smokers, and the tobacco companies spend over £100,000,000 per year in promotion alone.

You need to start building resistance to this brainwashing, just as if you were buying a car from a secondhand dealer. You would be nodding politely but you would not believe a word the man was saying.

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Start looking behind these glossy packets at the filth and poison beneath. Do not be fooled by the cut-glass ashtrays or the gold lighter or the millions who have been conned. Start asking yourself:

Why am I doing it?

Do I really need to?

NO, OF COURSE YOU DON'T.

I find this brainwashing aspect the most difficult of all to explain. Why is it that an otherwise

rational, intelligent human being becomes a complete imbecile about his own addiction? It pains me to confess that out of the thousands of people that I have assisted in kicking the habit, I was the biggest idiot of all.

Not only did I reach a hundred a day myself, but my father was a heavy smoker. He was a strong man, cut down in his prime due to smoking. I can remember watching him when I was a boy; he would be coughing and spluttering in the mornings. I could see he wasn't enjoying it and it was so obvious to me that something evil had got possession of him. I can remember saying to my mother, 'Don't ever let me become a smoker.'

At the age of fifteen I was a physical-fitness fanatic. Sport was my life and I was full of courage and confidence. If anybody had said to me in those days that I would end up smoking a hundred cigarettes a day, I would have gambled my lifetime's earnings that it would not happen, and I would have given any odds that had been asked.

At the age of forty I was a physical and mental cigarette junky. I had reached the stage where I couldn't carry out the most mundane physical or mental act without first lighting up. With most smokers the triggers are the normal stresses of life, like answering the telephone or socializing. I couldn't even change a television programme or a light bulb without lighting up.

I knew it was killing me. There was no way I could kid myself otherwise. But why I couldn't see what it was doing to me mentally I cannot understand. It was almost jumping up and biting me on the nose. The ridiculous thing is that most smokers suffer the delusion at some time in their life that they enjoy a cigarette. I never suffered that delusion, I smoked because I thought it helped me to concentrate and because it helped my nerves. Now I am a non-smoker, the most difficult part is trying to believe that those days actually happened. It's like awakening from a nightmare, and that is about the size of it. Nicotine is a drug, and your senses are drugged - your taste buds, your sense of smell. The worst aspect of smoking isn't the injury to your health or pocket, it is the warping of the mind. You search for any plausible excuse to go on smoking.

I remember at one stage switching to a pipe, after a failed attempt to kick cigarettes, in the belief that it was less harmful and would cut down my intake.

Some of those pipe tobaccos are absolutely foul. The aroma can be pleasant but, to start with, they

are awful to smoke. I can remember that for about three months the tip of my tongue was as sore as a boil. A liquid brown goo collects in the bottom of the bowl of the pipe. Occasionally you unwittingly bring the bowl above the horizontal and before you realize it you have swallowed a mouthful of the filthy stuff. The result is usually to throw up immediately, no matter what company you are in.

It took me three months to learn to cope with the pipe, hut what I cannot understand is why I didn't sit down sometime during that three months and ask myself why I was subjecting myself to the torture.

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Of course, once they learn to cope with the pipe, no one appears more contented than pipe smokers. Most of them are convinced that they smoke because they enjoy the pipe. But why did they have to work so hard to learn to like it when they were perfectly happy without it?

The answer is that once you have become addicted to nicotine, the brainwashing is increased. Your subconscious mind knows that the little monster has to be fed, and you block everything else from your mind. As I have already stated, it is fear that keeps people smoking, the fear of that empty, insecure feeling that you get when you stop supplying the nicotine. Because you are not aware of it doesn't moan it isn't there. You don't have to understand it any more than a cat needs to understand where the under-floor hot-water pipes are. It just knows that if it sits in a certain place it gets the feeling of warmth.

It is the brainwashing that is the main difficulty in giving up smoking. The brainwashing of our upbringing in society reinforced with the brainwashing from our own addiction and, most powerful of all, the brainwashing of our friends, relatives and colleagues.

Did you notice that up to now I've frequently referred to 'giving up' smoking, I used the expression at the beginning of the previous paragraph. This is a classic example of the brainwashing. The expression implies a genuine sacrifice. The beautiful truth is that there is absolutely nothing to give up. On the contrary, you will be freeing yourself from a terrible disease and achieving marvelous positive gains. We are going to start removing this brainwashing now. From this point on, no longer will we refer to 'giving up', but to stopping, quitting or the true position: ESCAPING!

The only thing that persuades us to smoke in the first place is all the other people doing it. We feel we are missing out. We work so hard to become hooked, yet nobody ever finds out what they have been missing. But every time we see another smoker he reassures us that there must be something in it, otherwise he wouldn't be doing it. Even when he has kicked the habit, the ex-smoker feels he is being deprived when a smoker lights up at a party or other social function. He feels safe. He can have just one. And, before he knows it, he is hooked again.

This brainwashing is very powerful and you need to be aware of its effects. Many older smokers will remember the Paul Temple detective series that was a very popular radio programme after the war. One of the series was dealing with addiction to marijuana, commonly known as 'pot' or 'grass'. Unbeknown to the smoker, wicked men were selling cigarettes that contained 'pot'. There were no harmful effects. People merely became addicted and had to go on buying the cigarettes. (During my consultations literally hundreds of smokers have admitted to trying 'pot'. None of them said they became hooked on it.) I was about seven years old when I listened to the programme. It was my first knowledge of drug addiction. The concept of addiction, being compelled to go on taking the drug, filled me with horror, and even to this day, in spite of the fact that I am fairly convinced that 'pot' is not addictive. I would not dare take one puff of marijuana. How ironic that I should have ended up a junky on the world's No. 1 addictive drug. If only Paul Temple had warned me about the cigarette itself. How ironic too that over forty years later mankind spends thousands of pounds on cancer research, yet millions are spent persuading healthy teenagers to become hooked on the filthy weed, our own government having the largest vested interest.

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We are about to remove the brainwashing. It is not the non-smoker who is being deprived but the poor smoker who is forfeiting a lifetime of:

HEALTH
ENERGY
WEALTH
PEACE OF MIND
CONFIDENCE
COURAGE
SELF-RESPECT
HAPPINESS
FREEDOM.

And what does he gain from these considerable sacrifices?

ABSOLUTELY NOTHING-except the illusion of trying to get back to the state of peace, tranquility and confidence that the non-smoker enjoys all the time.