

BluesNews

Volume 12, Issue 10

November 2018

The biggest lie I tell myself is "I don't need to write that down, I'll remember it."



MORAL RELATIVISM

I like to think of myself as a principled individual. I actively try to manage my own behavior and conduct according to my loosely organized set of principles. My principles are not particularly profound or exceedingly organized. They are not like 'Gibb's Rules:' they are not codified or structured, but they are not free-form and free-wheeling, either. I have frequently identified myself as an old hippie when I need to be introduced to someone, but my principles are not a simple reflection of the ethos of that era.

"Usually, when someone is called a 'person of principle' it is meant as a compliment. For the most part, we take that phrase as applying to the ethical elite: those who lead highly moral lives, and never, or at least rarely, fail to follow their moral principles. A person of principle

means someone who faithfully follows their principle or set of principles rather than abandoning them when convenient. If faced with a seemingly difficult decision in life, he or she will refer to his or her guiding set of principles and then merely deduce the correct action from it. If on rare occasions such principled people do not behave according to their principles, they would consider such actions to be moral mistakes on their part."

This is the opening paragraph of R. McNabb's, "Why You Should Not Be a Man of Principle" in September 2017's, "Philosophy Now". McNabb really wants to argue for greater moral particularism: a kind of flexible, yet consistent

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ethical relativism. McNabb asserts there are three very general ways of looking at principles as a guide to behavior. The first, and the most recognizable, approach to principles is religion. The second is utilitarianism. The third, somewhat more obscure, is Kantian (the Golden Rule with a twist...). Every one of these “systems of thought” have the same fatal flaw, according to McNabb: exceptions. For McNabb,

“Whether it is a set of divinely inspired commandments, Mill’s principle of utility, Kant’s categorical imperative, or some other principle(s), determining the proper course of action in any given situation has been thought to require little more than deducing from the right set of universal principles, and moral philosophy has, for the most part, been a search for that perfect set of principles. But I believe that moral judgement is not a matter of applying some overarching universal moral principles. In my view, it is quite the opposite. I propose instead that the moral knowledge we have is founded on particular cases, and that the principles we have are mere generalizations from those cases. Thus, our fourth option when faced with exceptional moral cases is: Allow our particular moral judgements to simply override our principles, thereby invalidating those principles.”

What follows from McNabb is a long, but brief and superficial, look at particularism. Ultimately, McNabb argues, “We should at least not just assume that moral thought is a top-down affair, in which proper moral action is deduced from higher moral principles... it might be the other way around – that moral thought is a bottom-up affair, in which the building blocks of moral knowledge are the clear particular moral cases, and that moral principles are inductive derivations from those cases.”

I am not sure what I believe. In most matters, I have slowly come to appreciate the ‘bottom-up’ approach: that my experience informs my thought and judgement and that my principles are built from those thoughts and judgements. I have not always thought this way. Certainly, it is not the way I conceptualize principles when I am teaching with foster families or our Bluewater staff. In these activities, I prefer to talk about first principles (of which, there are several) in a very top-down manner.

Secondly, I tend to think about principles as guides for behavior that tolerate a variety of outcomes rather than as rules for behavior with a prescribed outcome. In this vein, the perspective is much more relativistic than universal. That being said, I frown on any defense that claims all opinions have the same weight and I shun the cowardliness of “it all depends”. Clearly, an informed opinion is different from an un-informed opinion, even if we have difficulty explaining exactly why and how.

HUMOUR

An American on vacation in Orlando was inside a church taking photographs when he noticed a golden telephone mounted on the wall with a sign that read '\$10,000 per call'.

The American, being intrigued, asked a priest who was strolling by what the telephone was used for.

The priest replied that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 you could talk to God.

The American thanked the priest and went along his way.

Next stop was in Atlanta. There, at a very large cathedral, he saw the same golden telephone with the same sign under it. He wondered if this was the same kind of telephone he saw in Orlando and he asked a nearby nun what its purpose was.

She told him that it was a direct line to heaven and that for \$10,000 he could talk to God "Okay, thank you" said the American.

He then traveled to Indianapolis, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Boston and New York.

In every church he saw the same golden telephone with the same '\$10,000 per call' sign under it.

The American, upon leaving Vermont, decided to travel up to Canada to see if Canadians had the same phone. He arrived in Canada, and again in the first church he entered, there was the same golden telephone, but this time the sign under it read '50 cents per call'.

The American was surprised so he asked the priest about the sign. "Father, I've traveled all over America and I've seen this same golden telephone in many churches. I'm told that it is a direct line to Heaven, but in the US the price was \$10,000 per call. Why is it so cheap here?"

The priest smiled and answered "You're in Canada now, my son. It's a local call."

NEW MHA REPORT SHOWS MANY IN CRISIS, TRAUMA IN YOUTH HAVING LASTING IMPACT IN SCHOOLS AND BEYOND



ALEXANDRIA, Va. (PRWEB) October 31, 2018

For the fifth year in a row, Mental Health America (MHA) released its annual State of Mental Health Report, which ranks all 50 states and the District of Columbia based on several mental health and access measures. This year, Minnesota came out on top overall with Nevada coming in 51st. The report also dives into addressing trauma in youth, and its long-term impact on performance and behavior in school.

In developing the report, MHA looked at 15 different measures to determine the rankings. MHA hopes to provide a snapshot of mental health status among youth and adults for policy and program planning, analysis, and evaluation; to track changes in prevalence of mental health issues and access to mental health care; to understand how changes in national data reflect the impact of legislation and policies; and to increase the dialogues and improve outcomes for individuals and families with mental health needs.

Despite mental health being something that more and more people are talking about - far too many people are still suffering. People are simply not receiving the treatment they need to live healthy and productive lives - and too many don't see a way out.

While much of the state of our mental health care continues to be broken, there are glimmers of hope. Since the release of its first report, MHA is seeing small yet encouraging decreases in the number of American adults who have mental health concerns (from 18.19% to 18.07%) and substance use problems (from 8.76% to 7.93%). Yet overall, the picture is still quite bleak.

“Sadly, our report shows that there have been alarming increases in adult suicidal thoughts and major depression in youth,” said Paul Gionfriddo, president and CEO, Mental Health America. “Despite mental health being something that more and more people are talking about - far too many people are still suffering. People are simply not receiving the treatment they need to live healthy and productive lives - and too many don't see a way out.”

The estimated number of adults with serious suicidal thoughts is over 9.8 million – an increase of 200,000 people since last year.

Over 2 million young people cope with severe major depression. And that is just the population that has been diagnosed. On average, it takes 10 years between the onset of symptoms and when individuals receive treatment. Over 24 million individuals experiencing a mental health illness are going untreated.

MHA's report also shines the spotlight on childhood trauma and its impact long-term, and releases data that shows how much trauma can impact youth in school. Trauma-impacted youth are more likely to be absent from school, find themselves removed from classrooms, or struggle with academics. As part of MHA's Online Screening Program, in 2015 MHA offered an anonymous youth screen, the Pediatric Symptoms Checklist (PSC).

Since the PSC has been offered, 116,683 youth have been screened and 569 self-selected to identify themselves as trauma survivors. Of those who self-described:

67% of screeners stated they often have trouble concentrating in school.

73% reported the often felt sad or unhappy, with 64% reporting they often felt hopeless.

58% stated they had experienced trouble with their teachers, and the same percentage reported they had engaged in fights with other children.

66% reported they often felt irritable or angry.

Of those who identified as trauma survivors, 94% also scored positive for PTSD; 68% screened positive for Severe Depression; 96% screened at-risk for psychosis, and 63% screened positive for Bipolar.

43% of youth who identified as trauma survivors were not receiving mental health treatment or support, with 40% stating they had never received any mental health treatment or support.

MHA strongly supports integrating mental health services into the education system. Mental health interventions have shown to shorten episodes of mental health conditions and prevent the development of more severe conditions, and schools can play a critical part by implementing trauma-informed programs that have been shown to help students who have been impacted by trauma.

“Our children are crying out for help,” concluded Gionfriddo. “We must continue to improve access to care and treatments, and we need to put a premium on early identification and early intervention for everyone with mental health concerns. We must address these mental health concerns before crisis and tragedy strikes—before Stage 4.”

Mental Health America (MHA) – founded in 1909 – is the nation's leading community-based nonprofit dedicated to addressing the needs of those living with mental illness and to promoting the overall mental health of all Americans. Our work is driven by our commitment to promote mental health as a critical part of overall wellness, including prevention services for all, early identification and intervention for those at risk, integrated care, services, and supports for those who need it, with recovery as the goal.

HUMOUR (for Ken O ...congratulations my friend...)

An Employment History

1. My first job was working in an Orange Juice factory, but I got canned . Couldn't concentrate .
2. Then I worked in the woods as a Lumberjack, but just couldn't hack it, so they gave me the axe .
3. After that, I tried being a Tailor, but wasn't suited for it, mainly because it was a sew-sew job.
4. Next, I tried working in a Muffler Factory, but that was too exhausting.
5. Then, tried being a Chef - figured it would add a little spice to my life, but just didn't have the thyme.
6. Next, I attempted being a Deli Worker, but any way I sliced it.... I couldn't cut the mustard.
7. My best job was a Musician, but eventually found I wasn't noteworthy.
8. I studied a long time to become a Doctor, but didn't have any patience.
9. Next, was a job in a Shoe Factory. Tried hard but just didn't fit in.
10. I became a Professional Fisherman, but discovered I couldn't live on my net income.
11. Managed to get a good job working for a Pool Maintenance Company, but the work was just too draining.
12. So then I got a job in a Workout Center, but they said I wasn't fit for the job.
13. After many years of trying to find steady work , I finally got a job as a Historian - until I realized there was no future in it.
14. My last job was working in Starbucks, but had to quit because it was the same old grind.
- 15 . SO, I TRIED RETIREMENT AND I FOUND I'M PERFECT FOR THE JOB!

COLUMBINE, KILLING, AND YOU

BY
DR. BRUCE PERRY

Why? Why did they do it? Why would two teenagers deliberately plan and methodically carry out a murderous attack on their classmates? Why didn't anyone see this coming? Why didn't anyone intervene and prevent them from killing? How can we prevent anything like that from happening again?

Experts in crime, mental health, education, and social sciences have all been trying to understand the pathways to school violence. A few common observations emerge. The first, and most disturbing, is that human beings, like few other species, are pervasively aggressive, violent and murderous to each other. The major predators of humans are other humans.

The second important point is that all violence is not the same. Some violence is due to impulsive behavior, some due to the disinhibition by drugs or alcohol, some due to serious mental illness, some to hate, revenge, or retribution. How any individual comes to kill is a complex combination of circumstances, and it is almost impossible to know exactly "why" for any given act of violence. We will never really know the full answer to "why" for the murders at Columbine.

Yet this should not stop us from trying to understand and prevent violence. We know that not all humans kill. And some societies are more violent than others. So what do we know about the conditions that increase violence? What observations are common across cultures and through history when violence emerges?

1. When we become desensitized to death or killing, violence increases. When death and violence surrounds someone, the value of human life can diminish and the horror of violent death can decrease. In Europe during the Black Plague, up to half the people in a village could die in a few months. The survivors often migrated to medieval cities and, soon afterwards, the rates of violence and murder skyrocketed, exceeding the rates of killing in modern New York. Pervasive death desensitizes. Pervasive violence desensitizes. In the United States, while we have been spared the horrors of war in our land and plague, we will self-expose ourselves to remarkable violence. We will watch 200,000 graphic violent acts on TV by age 18. Too many of us have become desensitized to violent acts, not realizing the true effects of a bullet passing through a human body.

"That's so cool. Look at his head explode." Spoken by a nine-year-old boy watching TV. His aggressive behaviors in school were so disruptive that he was placed in a special classroom.

Being part of the solution: Don't watch so much violence. It is everywhere, but try to watch less. Certainly if you are watching and someone younger is in the room, turn the channel, get them out and help younger children see less violence. You may be able to understand something is "just television," but a young child cannot. Try to learn something about the real impact of violence. Listen to the mother of a murdered child. Find a classmate who has lost a parent or sibling to violence — maybe they can tell you what violence is really like. Your community may have a Survivor of Violence group; see what they can tell you. Try to see what a bullet really does. A little research can teach you more about violence than a lifetime of TV or movies.

2. When we become more detached from each other and from common unifying beliefs, violence increases. Without being connected to others, we care less for their welfare. When we share common bonds of belief and value with others, we are less likely to be aggressive or violent to others in our community. When individuals become isolated, marginalized, and without some connection to those around them, violence increases.

After seeing the crying parents of the girl he had beaten, strangled, and stabbed to death, an 18-year-old murderer muttered, "I don't know why they're crying — I'm the one going to jail."

Being part of the solution: Be part of something — at school or outside. Spend time with friends, in structured and non-structured activities. Talk, listen, laugh and be together. Time with friends, family, teammates, and classmates promote healthy social or emotional relationships. Along the way, identify isolated or marginalized kids — you know who they are. Reach out and include them in something. Look them in the eyes; talk to them between class; sit with them at

lunch. You will be surprised at how much you both can grow up.

3. When we allow hateful ideologies to make groups or classes of people to be viewed as different, bad or even less than human, violence increases. All too often, violence is linked to hate. Hateful beliefs such as racism, anti-Semitism and misogyny allow whole groups to be dehumanized. The more any group is misunderstood, the more the unknown can fuel fear and misunderstanding. In high schools, this can happen when cliques form — jocks, preps, geeks. Fear and misunderstanding can lead to hateful words and violent behaviors.

"They were just camel jockeys. They don't belong in this country anyway. I don't see what the big deal is. It's not like we robbed a priest." Comments from an interview with a fifteen-year-old boy who participated in an armed robbery at a convenience store run by a family from Lebanon.

Being part of the solution: Be intolerant of intolerance. Learn more about other religions, cultures, and worldviews. Be wary of individuals with hateful beliefs. Prevent degrading, humiliating, or bullying behaviors. Don't laugh at jokes that use hateful ideas — and certainly don't repeat them. Don't be afraid to call someone on a hateful or degrading comment about another group, religion, or culture. These hateful beliefs are like a cancer; they are never benign. They can spread, invade, and destroy. Stop them before they spread. At the heart of this tolerance is respect. If we treat each other with respect, we will be enriched by each other's beliefs rather than diminished.

4. When we are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, violence increases. Alcohol makes all people stupid and some people violent. A huge percentage of impulsive violence takes place under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. This is a particular problem with first-time or inexperienced drinkers. With little experience measuring the effects of alcohol, youth often drink too much, too often, and in the wrong places.

"I don't remember why it even started. We had a lot of beers and smoked some reefer. I didn't think he would die." A comment from a 17-year-old-boy who was one of three who beat a classmate to death at a party after a fight broke out — apparently about a parking place.

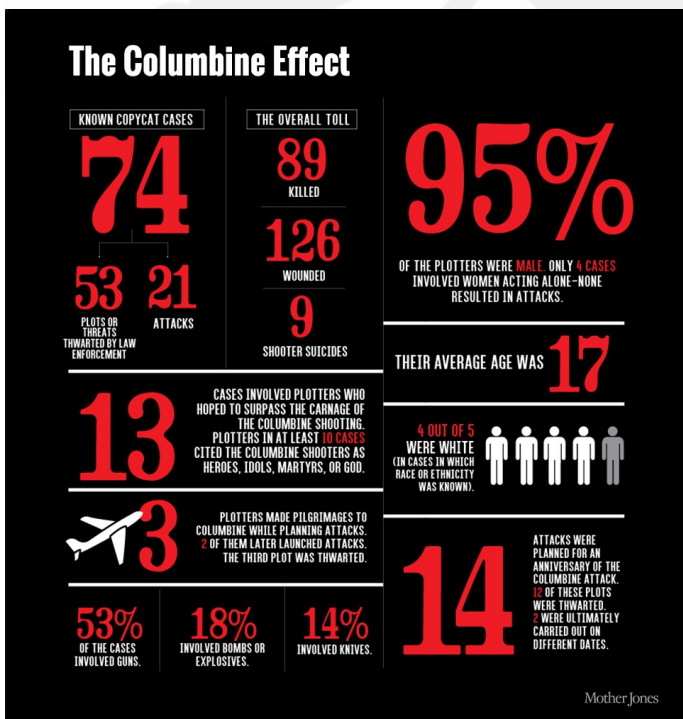
Being part of the solution: Stay away from alcohol and drugs. And if you won't, be moderate in your use, and be with people you know and trust in places that are safe. Stay off the roads. Don't ever pressure someone else to drink or use. Let them make up their own choices. And be prepared to live with the consequences of your choice. Grown-up behaviors have grown-up consequences. Hundreds of youth die each year due to the influence of alcohol or other drugs.

Over the last few generations, two new observations have emerged. There are some unique properties to our recent wave of violence in the United States.

5. We have become more efficient and practiced at killing behaviors. Five thousand years ago, a drunk, isolated, hateful person could try to kill, but would be limited by the means at hand. There were no handguns, no automatic weapons, and no explosives. They could kill one or two in an incident. Today, in a single fit of rage and hate, one person with automatic weapons can kill dozens of people. Today, one hateful person can bomb a building and kill hundreds. We have more available and efficient means to kill. And we are practicing. In the games we play — paintball, video games, and simulated war games — we are becoming practiced in the behaviors required to kill.

"It was pretty strange. I just raised up the rifle and shot. Just like I had a million times when I was a kid. It was just a little pop. And he just looked at me. And then slumped down. I was just trying to warn him. I didn't think it would kill him." From an interview with a 13-year-old boy who killed another youth.

Being part of the solution: Decrease the amount of time spent playing violent video games or practicing lethal behaviors. If



you see younger children "playing" at killing, see if you can help them find other ways to channel their energies.

6. We have easy access to handguns. There is ready availability of lethal weapons in our society. Handguns, rifles, automatic weapons are all easily purchased — legally and illegally. Children and youth can get guns. When someone is angry, drunk or hateful, the gun allows him or her to act in lethal ways. What may have been a fistfight becomes a murder. The availability of guns increases the probability of lethal violence.

"My dad just kept it in the drawer by his bed. I wanted to scare these guys that were messing with me at school. So I put it in my backpack and took it to school." From an interview with a nine-year-old child who took a loaded handgun to school.

Being part of the solution: Don't play with guns. Use guns with supervision. Never take guns to school. Never mix drinking and shooting. Don't carry a weapon. And if your family has a gun, help your parents come up with a safe place to keep it.

While we may never understand Columbine, we do know that we can help prevent more violence. We are not helpless. We know that acting in these six areas can decrease violence. Each of us plays a role. We are all part of a solution to school violence.

Note: This is a fuller version of Dr. Perry's article, "Why?" which appeared in Scholastic Scope, vol. 48 (15).

HUMOR

OPINIONS

On the first day of school, a first-grader handed his teacher a note from his mother. It read, 'The opinions expressed by this child are not necessarily those of his parents ..'

KETCHUP

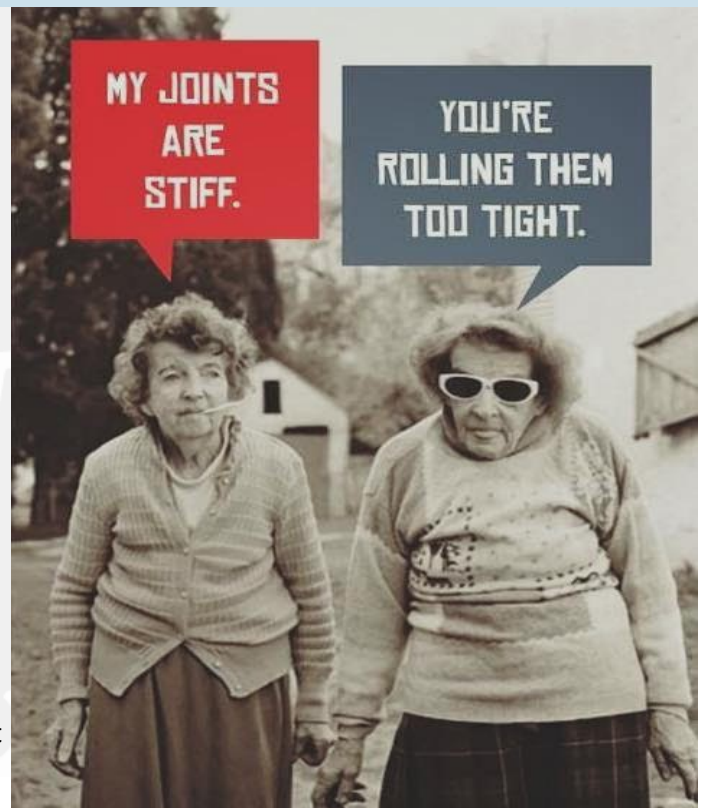
A woman was trying hard to get the ketchup out of the jar.. During her struggle the phone rang so she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone.. 'Mommy can't come to the phone to talk to you right now, she's hitting the bottle.'

DEATH

While walking along the sidewalk in front of his church, our minister heard the intoning of a prayer that nearly made his collar wilt. Apparently, his 5-year-old son and his playmates had found a dead robin. Feeling that proper burial should be performed, they had secured a small box and cotton batting, then dug a hole and made ready for the disposal of the deceased. The minister's son was chosen to say the appropriate prayers and with sonorous dignity intoned his version of what he thought his father always said: 'Glory be unto the Father, and unto the Son, and into the hole he goes.'

SCHOOL

A little girl had just finished her first week of school. 'I'm just wasting my time,' she said to her mother 'I can't read, I can't write, and they won't let me talk!'



Professional Development / InService

Leamington
1st and 3rd Wednesday

Parkhill
2nd and 4th Wednesday

Sept 19

Sept 26

Oct 3

Oct 10

Oct 17

Oct 24

Nov 7

Nov 14

Nov 21

Nov 28

Dec 7 (Christmas Luncheon— Kingsville Golf & Country Club)

Dec 12 (Christmas Luncheon— Bluewater office)

2019

Jan 16

Jan 9

Feb 6

Jan 23

Feb 20

Feb 13

March 6

Feb 27

March 20

March 13 (March Break)

April 3

March 27

April 17

April 10

May 2

April 24

May 15

May 8

June 5

May 22

June 12

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