BENEATH THE MASK
Hypocrisy and the Pathology of Shame

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With the exception of Rangell's seminal work, hypocrisy is conceptualized exclusively in terms of pathological narcissism and/or compromised superego formation. Recent psychoanalytic investigations of shame offer an alternative to this view, elucidating the motives of so-called moral hypocrites (Batson, Kobrynowicz, Dinnerstein, Kampf, & Wilson, 1997) who meet the diagnostic criteria for neither antisocial nor narcissistic personality disorder and whose behavior deviates from the ethical standards they otherwise hold. Although the shame-vulnerable individual and hypocrite ultimately are distinguished, the former offers a deeper understanding of the latter. Specifically, this analysis illuminates why and for whom the mask is worn, suggesting that shame avoidance plays a critical role in the etiology and furtherance of hypocrisy.

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For more than a decade, Trey led a double life. The affair began when he responded to the sexual advances of a woman whom he knew socially. Although initially passionate and exciting, his growing ambivalence led him to make numerous unsuccessful attempts to end the relationship. Concealing its existence from his wife, Nan, required Trey to deceive her in ways that left her feeling ashamed about her suspicions and inadequate as a woman. Despite his ambivalence, Trey believed Nan to be a very decent person undeserving of such treatment. Guilt and shame galvanized his resolve to end the affair, but his penance always was short-lived. Under the pressure of loneliness, depression, and threats from his mistress, Trey always resumed contact.

Strikingly, Trey only disclosed the affair to the therapist after one year of treatment, following a terrible row with Nan precipitated by his inexplicable confession of the affair—not a full confession of course, but enough to convey his deception. Nan assaulted him in a rage and, within days, fell into a deep depression, feeling utterly bereft and unable to leave her bed. He too lapsed into a similar state.

Most significant was Trey's bewilderment about the motives for his continued involvement and failure to anticipate the consequences of his actions. What he regarded as

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a moment of weakness during which he acted impulsively was, of course, no mere lapse. Although acknowledging the affair to be a terrible mistake, upon reflection, he arrived consistently at the same conclusion: There was nothing he could do about it now. He felt reassured by the fact that he did not intend for his family to suffer. Although recognizing that it might be interpreted otherwise, he insisted that he deceived his family because he loved and wished to protect them from hurtful information. He believed that these positive motivations somehow lessened the repugnance of his betrayal. He had never before done a dishonest thing in his life. He wanted nothing more than to put these "unfortunate events" behind him and return to the relative harmony of his life.

Psychoanalysts generally view such behavior as reflective of superego weakness and pathological narcissism. The hypocrite, like the sociopath, pursues the direct gratification of wishes with little regard for their relational consequences. However, in opposition to this view, I argue that some moral hypocrites (Batson et al., 1997) present an ethical system in which shame is defensively deleted or, more precisely, in which the conditions necessary for its instantiation are not realized. In hypocrisy, discrepancies that ordinarily produce feelings of exposure, weakness, and defectiveness—the hallmarks of shame (Wurmser, 1981)—are rationalized and disavowed, allowing the hypocrite to embrace the deceived view of the other and forestall the experience of shame. The mask thus serves a double function, selectively hiding flaws from others and, by controlling the reality disclosed by them, from the self. The mask paradoxically forestalls shame through shameful actions.

What Is Hypocrisy?

Not all forms of deception are alike. Unlike pathological lying or frank antisocial behavior, moral hypocrisy reflects the deceptive pursuit of self-interest in which the individual uniquely violates his or her own moral standards (Batson, Thompson, & Chen, 2002). Deception and moral standards are necessary elements in this narrative: Hypocrisy depends on their joint presence. But, this description masks an ambiguity. What specifically does it mean to be motivated by self-interest? Should it be construed simply as the pursuit of one's own rather than another's interests? That is, does it mean the hypocrite places his or her desires above those of others? Because self-interest is a ubiquitous human motive, conceptualizing hypocrisy in this way leads to the conclusion that we are all hypocrites. Thus, the question needs to be posed more specifically: What is unique about the hypocrite's pursuit of self-interest? If gratifying one's desires is its sole motivation, why does hypocrisy necessitate dissimulation? Why is the hypocrite at pains to appear morally better than he or she really is? Recognizing this dynamic is of cardinal importance to an appropriate understanding of this phenomenon and to its differentiation from sociopathy. In the latter, "what others think" matters only insofar as successful manipulation depends on the creation of doubt as to one's true intentions. The sociopath desires to be convincing only to successfully exploit others, to "get over." Such individuals feel little empathy or concern for the trust they betray.

Viewing it within the framework of the syndrome of compromise of integrity (C of I), Rangell (1976, 1980) sees hypocrisy as motivated by narcissistic traits that undermine moral values and act synergistically with an ego weakened by identification with a corrupt authority to facilitate the direct gratification of wishes. This identification upsets inter- and intrasystemic compromises, particularly among moral standards, prompting action rather than repression of impulses.

Rangell's (2000) view offers an alternative to the conclusion that such individuals simply lack moral standards and superego integration. It encourages examination of how "coexistence is practiced, and conflict is obliterated or denied" (p. 311) or, again, of the ways in which ". . .the mores of civilization are treated as though they are being followed, whereas in reality a separate code of behavior reigns" (p. 311). What marks the hypocritical turn is not the absence of guilt, but rather the ability to act immorally *despite* knowledge of and commitment to ethical standards. It reflects the all-too-human capacity to act in ways not easily reconciled with one's beliefs.

The combination of a desire to be perceived as morally better and the relative intactness of moral standards makes it difficult to reduce hypocrisy to pathological narcissism and/or superego weakness. Hypocrisy is viewed more usefully as a mode of cognition that shapes the perception of and interaction with others and is grounded in identifiable interests, fantasies, beliefs, and compromises. Trey, for example, did not want to live a double life. He rationalized transgressions in order to maintain a forbidden relationship, interpreting trysts as regrettable, but temporary lapses. Cumulatively, he expended as much energy avoiding as engaging in them. While he craved the feeling of being desired sexually, he grew increasingly uncomfortable with its risks and emotional costs. He treasured relationships and involvement with his children and took pride in the status his family enjoyed in the community. Thus, even from the perspective of self-interest, it is more accurate to say that he pursued some interests to the complete detriment of others, compromising values he cared deeply about in the process and, above all, his integrity. Disavowal and rationalization perpetuated a cycle of sexual excitement, shame, and deception, which offered no enduring comfort, satisfaction, or intimacy. Detection posed the very real danger of destroying his family. Although not formulated as such, deceiving his wife, family, mistress, and therapist provided a means of reconciling rather than relinquishing any of these competing interests.

Shame Experience

More than an affect, shame functions as a "complex emotional system regulating the social bond" (Lansky, 1999). It is complex, because the experience and the conditions inducing it vary widely across individuals; regulatory, because it portends painful affect, signaling one's diminished status in the eyes of others. It reflects the assessment of one's worth in ". . .the internal self-evaluative eye of the self" (p. 347). This experience stands in marked contrast to guilt, which pertains to what one does rather than who one is.

Wurmser (1981) describes shame as an unexpected, but overwhelmingly intense and inescapable sense of exposure about a personal flaw. Under its sway, one feels a profound defect has been exposed that leaves one standing naked before an audience with no exit, with no way to conceal the truth. Standing in the gaze of another is an essential aspect of the shame experience; shame implies a relationship to an observer through whose eyes one's flaws are seen. Postclassical analysts understand this phenomenon as the affect associated with a failure to live up to one's ideals (Piers & Singer, 1953) and structurally as a compromise formation with both internal and external elements (Yorke, 1990). Shame always is experienced in relation to a shaming object, which threatens the self with contempt, rejection, and, ultimately, abandonment (Piers & Singer, 1953). By contrast, self-psychologists view shame primarily as a reaction to unexpected misattunement (Morrison, 1994), specifically in relation to failures in mirroring and/or merger with selfobjects. One reacts with shame when one's goals, ideals, and aspirations are met

repeatedly with disappointment and contempt. Subsequent failures reanimate this feeling. Each perspective acknowledges the complex interplay between internal and external, between self perception and its relational integration that sets the stage for shame. Postclassical writers emphasize the wishful, endogenous basis for this experience, whereas self psychologists emphasize actual empathic failures.

Broucek (1997) understands shame more fundamentally as the failure to ". . .initiate, maintain, or extend a desired emotional engagement with a caretaker" (p. 44) or, more generally, as any disruption to the affective flow of interactions. Shame thus occurs prior to the establishment of reflective self-consciousness. Although its achievement transforms shame by encompassing concerns about exposing perceived vulnerabilities, the infant's earliest relational disappointments rather than detached self awareness are crucial interpretively. The meaning of subsequent shame experience derives from these configurations. Early trauma creates a template for shame experience.

These ideas raise a series of interesting and important questions. For example, if the meaning of or reason for shame resides in preverbal experience, how does one differentiate normal from pathological forms of shame? If both are reducible to the same experiential configurations, does the former differ from the latter only by amount or degree? Or, are they qualitatively distinct emotions that follow different developmental pathways? Further, does the reduction of shame to the template of early experience—however construed—exhaust our understanding of it? Are there no meaningful differences between the contemporary experience of shame and the early relational configurations to which it is assimilated interpretively?

That I seek but do not find recognition, attunement, or fulfillment of my goals leads to a number of possible outcomes. It may alter the nature of my attachment with significant others by virtue of inducing anxiety, sadness, and/or anger, motivating a variety of defensive countermeasures. I might, for example, rationalize these feelings, interpreting them as the result of forces external to me and beyond my control. Alternatively, I might deny or reverse the feelings of helplessness they engender by pursuing other forms of recognition. In none of these instances, however, need I feel shame. By contrast with primary emotions, shame requires not only object constancy, but also reflective self-consciousness, the ability to take a perspective on one's own emotional experience (Lewis, 1991) in which there is an appreciation both of one's own and the other's perspective. Seidler (2000) uses the term "reflexivity" to capture the idea of an "outside" (p. 134) or "third" (p. 65) perspective distinct from that of self and other. Positing shame experience in the absence of reflexivity conflates the emotional consequences of early misattunement with the distinctive sense of exposure resulting from the critical evaluation of behavior. The former is an insufficient condition of the latter; in all likelihood, shame rests on the developmentally more advanced capacity for detached, evaluative judgments about one's own ideas, feelings, and actions.

Shame as a Mode of Cognition

Shame regulates the social bond between individuals precisely because it represents the internalization of an ethical and social reality that carries weight. More than a wishful projection, it constitutes a mode of construing interpersonal experience, of forming judgments, or, following Lewis (1991), making attributions. It requires the internalization of standards, rules, and goals (SRGs) against which one's behavior is evaluated. But, according to Lewis, it also requires that judgments, first, are global and pertain to one's

identity rather than to the success or failure of specific actions; second, are negative and betoken a failure to conform to a standard or to live up to an ideal; and, third, that perceived failures are attributed to internal rather than external factors. These failures are one's own; they cannot be attributed to someone else, unfortunate circumstances, or bad luck. Failure experiences, therefore, are not encoded as "I have failed," but rather as "I am a failure" (Lewis, 1992).

With the exception of Seidler, investigators generally do not distinguish the content of the subject's self-evaluative judgment from the perspective of the other. They subscribe to a "symmetry" view in which the child presumably shares the caretaker's negative perspective and the former's shame is attributed to the identity of their perspectives. By linking shame to ". . .responses to selfobject misattunement and nonresponsiveness" (Morrison, 1994, p. 243), self psychologists, in particular, suggest that the contemptuous attitude of the other forms the basis for the conclusion that one ". . .is not unique or worthy of attention and develops a readiness to feel unworthy, inferior, or in some way flawed" (p. 244).

Yet, it is unclear that shame requires an observer who is critical or contemptuous of the subject or that the latter share the former's point of view. Against this "misattunement" view, consider the situation of the highly decorated veteran of war. His bravery saves the lives of several men during an ambush of his unit. He accepts his award, but privately feels shame. His feelings cannot be attributed to anyone's negative evaluation and his behavior is without exception heroic and exemplary. Neither is it apparent how it might be reduced to previous experiences of misattunement. Rather, the soldier feels shame for having served meritoriously in a military action he believes to be morally wrong. The award unexpectedly causes him to reevaluate actions that he now believes bring dishonor to him. The discrepancy causes him to see himself as something less than he believed himself to be.

Even if one believes that misattunement provides an experiential template for shame, this assumption does not justify the claim of symmetry between the subject's and observer's points of view. Consider Taylor's (1985) example of the nude model who, otherwise without shame about her profession, finds herself in a situation where the artist for whom she works takes a sexual interest in her. She reacts with shame to the discovery of his desire. Clearly, it is not a condition of her shame that she share the artist's view. That is, she need not see herself as an object of sexual desire; she need only be troubled by the awareness of his seeing her in this way, different from how she sees herself. The negative evaluation inducing shame is her own, rather than the artist's, and cannot be explained in terms of her having violated an internalized standard specific to her nudity, which presented no moral dilemma prior to her discovery of the artist's sexual interest. Neither need she be disturbed by the more general idea of being seen in a sexual way. Rather, it is her recognition of the differences in their perspectives that creates a discrepancy for her, one that she feels compelled to resolve. Her shame is engendered by the beliefs she holds about *this* discrepancy. It is important to note that these beliefs are not preordained or contained fully formed within her mind as it were, but instead reflect a new interpretation of her circumstances. For example, being exposed in this particular way may cause her to feel degraded, but is identical neither with the artist's nor with her original view (Taylor, 1985). Reducing her judgment in this matter simply to early experience or the internalization of her parents' point of view fails to due justice to its complexity. The *discrepancy* causes her to see herself in a new, but diminished and unfavorable light.

Rules prescribe a course of action minimizing the need for interpretation and judgment. However, the guidance offered often is incomplete and actionable only ". . .with many and various exceptions" (Williams, 2002, p. 121). Williams makes this point

specifically about the prohibition against lying. For example, does this rule help a mutual friend respond to Nan's concern about Trey's unusual and somewhat distant behavior? If the friend possesses knowledge relevant to her query, answering Nan's question poses an ethical dilemma. The same prohibition leads to absurdity if applied to situations like the following: While working with a humanitarian mission in Iraq, I am cornered by several armed insurgents who ask if I am an American. By denying my nationality, I clearly violate the prohibition against lying. Yet, have I have breached a moral imperative about which I should feel regret?

Upon reflection, we may agree on what is morally permissible in each instance, but it is unlikely that these judgments derive in any straightforward fashion from the prohibition against lying. They involve reflection on and integration of a wide range of beliefs and SRGs that inspire responsible decisions. If overly formalized to cover all possible exceptions, the rule thus generated likely will be an ineffective and uncompelling guide for ethical behavior (Arlow, 1982).

Because one constructs rather than simply internalizes interpretations of interpersonal and social experience, it is one's interpretations that matter most. Hartmann (1960) recognizes this, speaking in classical terms of the ego's "transvaluation of moral values" (p. 30) or transformation of internalized parental demands into one's moral code. Constructions are of course grounded in experiences with actual people, groups, or institutions that represent the raw elements from which beliefs and/or SRGs are fashioned and, in turn, provide the basis for detached evaluation. With so much potential variability, shame cannot be linked to any particular experience or mental content. For Hartmann, codification of morality implies a degree of autonomy from presumed sources. For this reason, shame is unlikely to possess the kind of uniformity often attributed to it. Taylor argues that shame reflects the more general circumstance of distress at being observed at all, particularly in a way that is discrepant from one's own view. *Any* observation of self is construed negatively and provides a motive for defense. How one is seen—that is, the particular meaning attached to this circumstance—depends on previous constructions of experience. These constructions provide shame with its individual stamp without requiring that it reflect preverbal experience directly.

Clinical Vignette

Trey was no stranger to shame. He lived an unhappy life, physically and emotionally abused by his truculent, tyrannical father. He watched helplessly as his father's bellicosity and open infidelities slowly destroyed his mother, who died shortly before Trey went off to boarding school. He remembers vividly the warm moments they spent together, Trey often urging her to divorce his father, not fully grasping how ill she was. He felt the pain of his mother's humiliation, hatred for his father who exploited her, and self-loathing at his pathetic passivity.

Trey reinvented himself over the course of high school, developing a reputation for scrupulous honesty and trustworthiness that earned him the moniker "straight arrow." Trey flourished in his newly fashioned identity, learning something new about himself that inspired confidence and softened his painful shyness and social awkwardness. What he lacked internally, he learned to simulate outwardly. He thrived on the responsiveness of others, which made this identity feel more real.

In college, Trey discovered a kindred spirit in Nan, who also had lost her mother and received little love from her highly successful, alcoholic father. Nan never demanded

more than he could give emotionally. Once married, Trey traveled the globe, brokering multimillion-dollar deals while she immersed herself in the children and charitable causes. Frustrated by her lack of sexual desire, he felt enlivened by another woman's interest in him. He longed for this relationship despite knowing full well that it was wrong. He felt less guilty when he viewed each tryst as an isolated lapse, one he vowed not to repeat. He wanted to believe that Nan accepted their increasingly separate lives, but, as time passed, felt only despair. With each sexual rebuff, with each reproach, he grew increasingly angry with her and with his passivity and lack of confidence. He acted on his longings despite knowing better, but without the subjective experience of agency or will. He experienced his involvement passively, as a reaction to the circumstances, and detachedly resigned himself to immurement in an emotionally deadened marriage.

When Trey entered treatment, he had had no contact with his mistress for approximately two years. She called occasionally, inviting him for a drink in the city where they both worked. Typically, he declined and recriminations followed. His pattern was to call her back and, with much ambivalence, arrange a tryst that ended with his literally bolting from the woman's apartment following sexual intercourse. They would not speak for months thereafter: she enraged; he perplexed, but relieved. So far he had resisted the impulse to return her calls.

During an interval in which he had neither seen nor heard from her, Trey spontaneously confessed the affair to his wife as they sat together one evening. He was feeling particularly guilty and burdened by his secret when Nan again voiced suspicions about this woman. Trey arrived for his next session appearing more depressed and agitated than ever. He reported that Nan, devastated by these revelations, had ordered him out of the house. She also confided the sordid details of the affair to their teenaged children. Trey wept at the realization of the harm he had done and was determined to salvage his marriage at any cost.

Only later did Trey focus on the significance of his withholding the affair from the therapist. His behavior was just too painful for him to reveal. Of course, he wanted to tell me and hoped that I might somehow figure it out, but his initial reticence only made the prospect of telling me more difficult: "How would I explain not having told you in the first place? I'm really sorry. I wish I could change what happened, but I can't."

Trey sought, but could not find a comfortable coexistence. He could neither integrate nor escape the shameful self image that was his father's legacy. He felt overwhelmed and rendered powerless by its manifestation in relationships. He resisted the notion that he had handled his marriage and his treatment similarly, reacting to such interpretations alternately with indifference, bewilderment, and shame. He oscillated between feeling that he was the victim of circumstances beyond his control and seeking forgiveness for his transgressions. In neither instance did he recognize that his pattern of duplicity and avoidance reflected something significant and abiding about him. In wearing the mask, Trey simulated the conditions for mutual trust, respect, and collaboration. At a deeper level, he felt that real acceptance was possible for him only in the role of "straight arrow," a caricature that shielded him from his father's contemptuous view. Without it, his imposturous façade exposed, he felt weak, ashamed, and defective. Better tainted acceptance than none at all.

Shame and Hypocrisy

In its broadest sense, hypocrisy is a strategy for resolving conflicts of interest, albeit one involving deception. It is a commonplace in politics and public life, which, unlike intimate

relationships, require "useful partnerships" (Grant, 1997, p. 21) among intersecting rather than identical interests. Cooperation is necessary because what is needed cannot be taken, coerced, or created without assistance. Grant suggests that the mutual dependence of the parties makes the appearance of trustworthiness necessary.

The analogy to politics is useful in yet another way. It highlights the pursuit of a relational experience obtainable only by another's act of free will. Love, acceptance, and respect cannot be coerced; they must be given freely. But the hypocrite is wary of leaving such matters to chance. He or she wants to reap the rewards of intimacy without having to make the sacrifices or bear the responsibility it requires. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the discomfort and uncertainty associated with such sacrifices are experienced as intolerable and increase the likelihood of deception. Intrapsychically, despite being recognized as necessary for intimacy, trustworthiness is inconsistently maintained against the corrupting influence of desire. Conditions are particularly ripe for hypocrisy when desires must be satisfied noncoercively by someone whose interests overlap, but do not coincide with one's own. Deception vitiates trust, but is difficult to detect because of the opacity of others' motives.

Moral hypocrisy exploits important differences between the expectations of public and private existence. In the former, expectations for sincerity and truthfulness generally are lower. We are disappointed but not surprised when a politician fails to fulfill a campaign promise or the car salesman's initial offer is far above what he will accept. However, in our closest relationships, we attach great value to these virtues and judge deviations harshly. Intimacy assumes trustworthiness as well as the continuity between intentions and actions, which render it particularly vulnerable to dissimulation. Intimacy depends on a high degree of transparency of motives and belief in the other's commitment to trust.

Rangell deconstructs the meaning of self interest in Cs of I more precisely in terms of ambition, power, and opportunism (1980). He contrasts efforts at adaptation, broadly construed to include self interests, with internalized prohibitions, arguing that identification with a (corrupt) aggressor allows direct gratification of wishes without guilt. These dynamics operate synergistically: Ego interests erode integrity, making it vulnerable to the disinhibiting influence of corrupt authority. If the oedipal father sanctions such behavior, one may act on otherwise unconscious, forbidden wishes without guilt.

Rangell's hypocrite closely resembles the narcissist: He is grandiose, unempathic, and unintegrated in the sense that ". . .his avowed values d[o] not fit with his actions, reality with what he sa[ys] are the facts,. . .his productions with his promises, his instincts with what he g[ives] as his goals" (pp. 212–213). His needs for admiration and achievement are insatiable and pursued without guilt. It is important to note that his compromised superego permits him to derive pleasure without regard for the means by which it is achieved. Corrupt authority weakens inhibitions, alters values, and obliterates conflict engendered by violating normative standards.

This perspective is no mere extension of the principles of neurosis to human affairs (Rangell, 2002). The syndrome of C of I is a disorder reflecting characteristic intrasystemic (narcissistic) and intersystemic (ego-superego) conflicts that distinguish it clinically from neurosis. Rangell sees it as, ". . .on par with neurosis. . .[and as]. . .universally applicable" (p. 1121). As a continuum of psychopathology, Cs of I accommodate actions contrary to moral beliefs and attitudes reflecting double standards without implying clinical psychopathology. The superego's openness to outside influence provides the basis for such discrepancies and the mechanism by which values and cultural practices are inculcated. This openness also links the intrapsychic and sociocultural levels of Rangell's analysis.

To understand why the intrapersonal is indispensable to Rangell's position requires an appreciation of the fact that social and/or environmental factors alone explain neither the reason for identification with a particular authority figure (or group), nor why some values achieve prominence over others. There are myriad authority figures, ideologies, groups, and values available for identification, only a subset of which is salient for the individual. In addition, such explanations fail to account for the hypocrite's motivation to appear morally better. If identification with a corrupt authority is a sufficient condition of immoral action, there is no need of deception. Identification alone is presumed to alter moral evaluation such that what was forbidden now is permissible. But this clearly is not the case: Hypocrisy requires the co-occurrence of immoral action and deceptive efforts to appear morally better. For this reason, any interpretation of Cs of I that ignore psychodynamics, character structure, and the individual's construction of experience is incomprehensible (Naso, 2006).

Rangell emphases the dynamics of hypocrisy located at the sociopathic end of spectrum of Cs of I rather than the motives of otherwise moral people who act immorally. Broadly designated as moral hypocrites, this subset of individuals presents neither the insatiable needs for recognition, nor the callousness of the narcissist. Often, such individuals shrink from the spotlight, showing a willingness to exchange the rewards of power and ambition for the feelings of acceptance and safety they desperately crave. They want to be liked and to avoid intolerable feelings of shame. Shame-avoidance rather than grandiosity motivates their sacrifice; acceptance negates the need for reflective self-awareness and, therefore, the necessity of facing unbearable personal flaws. Bypassing reflection forestalls the experience of shame and fears of abandonment. Hypocrisy makes the possibility of abandonment real and transforms shame anxiety from a constraint to a facilitator of immoral action.

Shame is, of course, linked intrinsically to narcissism, but not to pathological narcissism. The former provides reasons to hide defects and avoid situations of exposure, but, unlike the latter, necessitates neither dishonesty nor duplicity. Clinically, the hypocrite rarely experiences shame affect in relation to immoral action. Instead, intolerance of shame heightens awareness of situations likely to induce it. Shame anxiety provides a powerful motive to hide behind the mask, to remove oneself from the gaze of the other, and/or to exploit opportunities to appear morally better. In particular, shame is avoided by actions altering the other's perception in the direction of conformity with the wished-for image of the self. Success abrogates the conditions necessary for shame, subverting the accuracy of the other's appraisal, which forms a necessary condition for reflective self-awareness.

How does the hypocrite avoid reflective self awareness despite knowledge of relevant moral standards? He or she neither lacks the cognitive capacity for emotions of self-assessment, nor the ability to evaluate behavior from the perspective of another. One suggestion offered by the work of analysts like Renik (1992) and Grossman (1993) is that fantasies or cherished beliefs are substituted for the accurate appraisal of reality, thus diminishing its impact. Faced with disparate perceptions, one believes or acts in accordance with one's desires. Disavowal thus makes immoral action possible, while shame-avoidance provides its motive. The former undermines reflective self-awareness; it precludes consideration of all available information necessary for discriminating, reflective judgment. It disguises perceived defects.

The work of Lewis highlights yet another way in which disavowal operates to forestall shame: Transgressions are not interpreted negatively as reflecting personal failures. They are rationalized as behaviors uncharacteristic of the self, as exceptions to rather than

reflections of personal identity. Rationalization thus provides an additional layer of defense in which potentially negative appraisals are cast in a more positive light. Operating synergistically with disavowal, it diminishes self experience, particularly with regard to the sense of agency, and forecloses feeling states, values, and cognitive resources necessary for critical judgment. With important linkages between intentions and actions left unformulated, the hypocrite is ill equipped to grapple with problems in living and likely to experience consequences with a sense of surprise rather than ownership. From the observer's perspective, this experience stands in marked contrast to the proficiency with which actions appear to anticipate the responses of others. Despite disavowal and rationalization, sensitivity to expectations and context paradoxically is maintained.

Although it has yet to attract serious psychoanalytic interest, Batson's research powerfully demonstrates that conflicts between moral standards and behavior often are resolved in favor of the latter, a finding consistent with almost 50 years of research on cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Disavowal, rationalization, and moral disengagement facilitate immoral action by altering the importance of dissonant beliefs and/or removing awareness of them altogether. In this way, Batson offers an understanding of hypocrisy that does not necessarily implicate uncontrolled impulses, superego weakness, and/or pathological narcissism. Conversely, moral action sometimes more simply represents the least costly way of appearing moral (Batson, Thompson, Seuferling, Whitney, & Strongman, 1999). Because shame (like self-evaluative emotion generally) hinges on the experience of discrepancy, this model also illuminates how shame is avoided.

Moral Hypocrisy: The Core Dilemma

Williams (2002) articulates the hypocrite's ethical violation clearly:

> I lead the hearer to rely on what I say. . . and in abusing this I abuse the relationship, which is based on it. Even if it is for good reasons of concern for her, I do not give her a chance. . .to form her own reactions to the facts (as I suppose them to be),. . .but give her instead a picture of the world, which is a product of my will. Replacing the world in its impact on her by my will, I put her, to that extent, in my power and so take away or limit her freedom (p. 118).

Hypocrisy, therefore, involves not only the disavowal of the violation of a rule or moral standard. It is not merely a matter of the subject holding disparate perceptions or values, only one of which is attended to or possesses evidentiary value. Hypocrisy also is inherently interpersonal and hinges on two key mechanisms. First, despite the experience of diminished agency, the hypocrite influences the observer's perceptions, exercising a subtle power over them in an effort to create an object perfectly attuned to his or her needs. Deleting potential discrepancies between one's own and the other's view also removes necessary conditions for shame experience. Second, hypocrisy requires self-deception in which the subject responds primarily to the authenticity of the acceptance offered, thus feeling more secure and morally better. This experience depends on the relative disconnection among intentions, actions, values, and consequences made possible by disavowal and rationalization. Because dissonance prompts reflection, reducing it promotes self-deception and security. By simultaneously embracing the reflected gaze of the other, fulfilling the unconscious fantasy of what is longed for, and, importantly, disavowing the means by which it is achieved, the experience of discrepancy and the potential for exposure are avoided. This strategy compellingly satisfies the hypocrite's need for an object relationship, at least temporarily, despite associated fears of abandonment. By

virtue of his or her deeds, the hypocrite justifiably fears abandonment and, therefore, possesses a strong incentive to keep conflicts unformulated. While unconsciously these fears reflect the kinds of early experiences described by Morrison (1994, 1999) and Piers, contemporary acts of betrayal and deception increase the likelihood of traumatic loss.

Tragically, hypocrisy denies to the hypocrite what is sought. The experiences of love, acceptance, and trust are simulated and longed for, but rarely achieved. Hypocrisy locks the subject in a cycle of conditional acceptance and compromised intimacy. However much deception removes the immediate threat of abandonment, it drives the hypocrite deeper into a predicament that unconsciously is enacted over and over again. Trust rests unsteadily on a foundation of duplicity. Deception taints the very objects upon which the hypocrite so desperately depends.

Conclusion

Liberated from its customary role as affect, shame deepens our understanding of some forms of hypocrisy. It represents at once a signal for defense, a mode of cognition, and a mechanism regulating relationships with others. The hypocrite's dread of shame causes him to take drastic measures to avoid it, compromising relationships and his or her integrity in the process. So complete is this avoidance that shame affect often is not experienced directly. However, its reliable and powerful emergence under circumstances of detection removes any doubt as to its cardinal relevance.

Shame avoidance and shame anxiety provide indirect motives for hypocrisy. For example, one might withhold information affording a more complete view of one's thoughts, feelings, and painful personal flaws. Although failure to do so may create a false impression, one is under no obligation morally to make such disclosures. So long as truthfulness has not been seriously compromised, such actions are distinguished easily from hypocrisy both morally and psychologically. The hypocrite deceives others by depriving them of information relevant to establishing and maintaining relationships of trust. He or she betrays this trust not only to conceal shameful aspects of the self, but to secure what is needed, may not be gotten otherwise, and cannot be coerced.

Shame provides a motive for immoral action without release from moral commitments. This release is provided by the defense of disavowal (Naso, 2006). Disavowal facilitates the selective compromise and/or waiver of discrepancies among moral standards without their abrogation. Although this perspective emphasizes a different aspect of the syndrome of C of I, it is neither inconsistent with it nor with the growing body of empirical research on the subject (Batson, Kobrynowicz, et al., 1997; Batson, Thompson et al., 2002). For Rangell, heightened narcissism and pathological identifications operate jointly to compromise values and prompt immoral action. Whether acting directly by encouraging immoral behavior or indirectly by transforming passive into active trends unconsciously, this configuration has the potential to produce the most egregious moral violations, including frank antisocial behavior.

By contrast, the moral hypocrite's values do not show complete corruption and his or her functioning is characterized by a greater degree of overall integration. Compromise and deception selectively further self-interest and decrease the likelihood of detection and shame. In hypocrisy, discrepancies are disavowed and rationalized and beliefs altered to accommodate immoral action. This process is seen clearly in the case illustration of Trey. Although his hypocrisy can be interpreted as a triumphant reversal of his father's contemptuous view, Trey's subjective experience is not one of triumph. He derives

remarkably little pleasure from his actions and never feels consciously that his transgressions are morally permissible. Instead, he experiences them as the only way to reconcile all of the conflicting interests in his life. He avoids rather than struggles with alternatives, unable to sacrifice his relationship with either woman. He not only disavows the discrepancy between his actions and moral standards, but the necessity of choosing between, rather than deceptively maintaining, these relationships.

That Trey's stance betokens sexual yearnings that find no outlet in his marriage, resentment toward his wife, and/or shame with regard to his passivity do not account completely for his behavior. Neither does the claim that his behavior expresses identification with the aggressor. These views are relevant, but overly general. For example, the latter claim fails to do justice to the complex differences between his father's actions and his own. Trey found his father's degradation of his mother abhorrent and morally reprehensible. He felt powerless to protect her and fashioned an identity concealing his painful helplessness. However, never would he treat anyone as his father had. Trey's moral transgressions were selective and circumscribed. They involved the gratification of forbidden wishes, but simultaneously expressed the need to remain within the other's good graces, to feel loved and accepted despite his transgressions. He satisfied these needs by morally questionable means and deceived himself into accepting their positive appraisals, thus escaping true arraignment in their reflected gaze.

If Rangell emphasizes identification with corrupt paternal authority, the present view underscores the hypocrite's ambivalent relationship with morality. The intrinsic link between being oneself and feeling loved is weakened by the fantasy that acceptance can be found by appearing to be someone else. This is not meant to imply a second, fully formed identity, but rather an expurgated version of oneself. What is sought more specifically is an object that offers love unconditionally, despite the subject's flaws, but whose acceptance cannot be risked by the unpredictable reactions to what lies beneath the mask. Symbolically, this dynamic implicates relationships with maternal as well as paternal objects.

Sadly, once the pattern is established, hypocrisy only intensifies the need for deception. Unless the hypocrite mobilizes the courage to grapple honestly with intrapersonal and relational issues, he or she must carefully control not only what is revealed to others, but also what is permitted to enter self-awareness. Trapped in a cycle in which the threat of detection, shame, and abandonment loom ubiquitously, he or she increasingly settles for appearing rather than being moral.

For whom does the hypocrite wear the mask? Answering this question requires the integration of three distinct dynamics. First, the mask is worn for the other who confers the acceptance and love that is yearned for. This object is not to be confused with the real other who is deceived, but rather represents an elaborately constructed, fantasized other, understood interpretively as a caregiver in one's early life. Early experiences may have gratified wishes or, alternatively, offered acceptance on the basis of false-self relating. Second, it is worn for the real other who offers acceptance. However, deception is necessary to insure this outcome, since the hypocrite believes that disappointment and abandonment are the likely consequences of the other's accurate appraisal. Third, and most important, the mask is worn for the self. Only through self-deception is the circle of hypocrisy complete. Without it, the hypocrite must confront the possibility that he or she deserves the contempt that is so desperately avoided. Hypocrisy is intrinsically linked to shame because the truth lurking in the reflected gaze of the other, following Wurmser, is that he or she is fundamentally unlovable.

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