

Shrink Rap Radio #550: Archetypal Roots in the Evolution of Consciousness and the Upheaval of Paradigm Shift

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David Van Nuys, PhD, aka "Dr. Dave" interviews Jerome S. Bernstein

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Introduction: On today's show, I'll be speaking with Jungian analyst Jerome S. Bernstein about the archetypal roots of the national and global situation we find ourselves in today. Among his many publications, he is the author of the book *Borderland Consciousness: The Evolution of Consciousness and the Challenge of Healing Trauma*. For more information about Jerome S. Bernstein, please see our show notes at shrinkrapradio.com.

Dr. Dave: Jerome S. Bernstein, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio!

Jerome: Thank you, it's good to be here.

Dr. Dave: Well, I'm very pleased to have you on the show. You were recommended to me by Jungian analyst Monika Wikman, who has been a frequent guest on this show. You yourself have been a Jungian analyst for some forty years or more, plus your work has been informed by your studies and work with elders in the Navajo nation for forty-five years. These experiences have given you a unique perspective on what's happening at a deeper level in the world today. So, part of the title of today's interview refers to the archetypal roots in the evolution of consciousness. I think that implies a lot, so maybe we should start with the small task of defining what you mean by archetype.

Jerome: What I mean, and what I think Jung meant, was objective psychic forms – I guess is the way, perhaps, to frame it – that exist in the human psyche. So some simple examples of that would be mother, or father, or friend, or hero. Those characteristics, those archetypal forms, have similar characteristics across cultures and different groups. They're psychic constructs, is one way of looking at them.

Dr. Dave: I think of it as a readiness to respond to certain kinds of images or contents. They're not content-specific, right?

Jerome: Content specific... that carries a certain objectivity. What I would say is that they're form-specific, they're psychic-specific. So let me give an example that may help. When I was a candidate training to become a Jungian analyst, we had a course on Greek mythology, since the Greeks are very fundamental, historically, to Western culture. In one class, we were reviewing the myth of Theseus, who was a Greek hero, and I was totally unfamiliar with him. And as I was reading the characteristics of his story, it was feeling more and more familiar. And the more I read, the more familiar it seemed. And to make a long story short, pursuing that, what I discovered was that I knew this myth because it was the same – not similar – the same as the hero-myth of one of the Navajo hero twins in their origin story.

Dr. Dave: Hmmm. Wow.

Jerome: And when I realized that I thought, that can't be, how can there be a connection between Navajo and Ancient Greece? And so I went and got paper and drew a line down and started putting characteristics of the Navajo figure and Theseus. They were identical except for one factor, and that was that the Navajo hero was one of a twin, he had a twin brother. And I thought, well that's a major distinction; I wonder what that's about.

except for one factor, and that was that the Navajo hero was one of a twin, he had a twin brother. And I thought, well that's a major distinction; I wonder what that's about. So I went back into the literature on Theseus and darn it if I didn't find a version of the myth where he had a twin brother.

Dr. Dave: Wow. Interesting.

Jerome: So there you have an archetypal image or form dressed in different cultural clothes, so to speak.

Dr. Dave: Now, you referred to the role of archetypes in the evolution of consciousness, so what can you tell us about that? I know it's a big topic.

Jerome: Well, my work for the past nearly twenty years has been focused on what I began to discover in my clinical practice, which was that with an increasing number of people, clients who came in, they were bringing clinical material that didn't fit the clinical models which I understood and in which I was trained. Of course, a lot of people did, but there was a growing number who did not. And I wondered about that. And so, it's a long story and I'll shorten it. That took me to what I consider to be the foundational myth of western culture, which is Genesis, the book of Genesis. And in the book of Genesis, we have the Garden of Eden, and Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and their state of at-oneness, at-oneness before the expulsion. And after they eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, the very first thing that happens is the birth of reflective consciousness because they realize for the first time that they are naked. And that realization was the first manifestation of reflective consciousness, which is characteristic of our species. And then as I worked with that myth, what I came to realize was that the expulsion had a teleology, and that was to move our species from the unreflective, non-reflective, at-oneness with nature in the garden prior to the expulsion to post-expulsion, where that was the birth, the beginning, of the evolution of what we know today as western consciousness and civilization. And where I think we are now, right now, 21st century, is that that reflective consciousness – a lot of people refer to it as left-brain consciousness, which is binary and abstract and logical – a lot of people, a lot of psychologists and scientists, see it as over-developed and ultimately leading to threats like the global climate crisis. And so, the question is, what is to be done about that? Well, putting the pieces together, what I came to realize was that the different kind of clinical material that people were bringing into my practice was reflective of right-brain consciousness, which is more intuitive, more feeling, less abstract... and I see that as an evolutionary process where the collective psyche is trying to compensate for the over-development of the left-brain psyche. We all know that the climate crisis is a threat to our species, let alone to the earth. And yet, as witnessed by American politics right now, notwithstanding the fact that we know that, we behave in a self-destructive, if not suicidal, way. And one of the things that Darwin commented on was that characteristic of evolution that organs and species that become overspecialized become extinct. And that's where we are if we do not have an adequate compensation for the over-development of our left-brain consciousness.

Dr. Dave: Okay, well we'll talk more about the political situation as we go along. I wanted to explore a little bit more some of the background. We haven't mentioned the collective unconscious. Now, the archetypes are closely related to the idea of the collective unconscious. So, let's have you say a little bit about that. And then I want to ask you, can we speak of a national unconscious, or not?

Jerome: That's an interesting question. Well, the collective unconscious... we can see that going back in history and we can see it unfolding right now. Because, one of the things about the recent election with Trump is that it literally has overthrown a whole psychic paradigm – psycho-political paradigm – that has been operative, really, since the end of the First World War in the American psyche. So I guess I'm addressing both parts to your question at the same time. And it appeared right up to the day of the election that we were headed for a particular outcome. I don't think there was anybody in the

end of the First World War in the American psyche. So I guess I'm addressing both parts to your question at the same time. And it appeared right up to the day of the election that we were headed for a particular outcome. I don't think there was anybody in the country that was not surprised by a Trump victory. Everybody, including me, was expecting a Hillary victory, and considering Trump and what he represented as a very unpleasant intrusion. And so, looking at it from the standpoint of the collective unconscious and Trump's shocking victory, was that the collective shadow side of American culture, American politics, by that I mean everything that Trump represents – bigotry, misogyny, prejudice of all sorts, seeing the "other" as enemy, all of that and of course the roots of slavery, all of that – erupted out of the collective unconscious, for which Trump has been the agent and spokesperson for bringing this out into the open and forcing us, all of us, to look at what we have been unwilling to look at. And that defied all logic, including all the pundits and pollsters, and everybody else. And there you have the collective unconscious speaking in a very direct way. Namely, the message being, it is now time and of necessity to face the shadow dynamics of the American psyche and American sociopolitical structure.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, you've gotten us into the second part of today's title, the upheaval of paradigm shift, and that's what you've just been describing. You sent me a couple papers that were based on, I guess, presentations that you gave to a Jungian society on this topic. It was so good that I've copied a bunch of passages and I'll probably read some of these to you and get you to expand on them. They're saying basically what you've just said, but you spell it out in a little bit more detail. We have the election of Donald Trump here in the US, we've got Brexit in the UK, we've got populist movements across Western Europe. So there does seem to be some major political paradigm shift. So how would you characterize... what is the old paradigm? I think you were kind of alluding to that. If we are shifting out of the old paradigm, we may not know where we're going exactly, but what is it that we're leaving behind?

Jerome: What we're leaving behind is order, more than anything else, order, and an understood, heretofore understood, unconscious compact between the ruling class, which include the Democrats *and* the Republicans – as well as the Republicans – wherein the social compact that had existed and American hegemony after World War II, which has been pretty much accepted by the world, by all countries in the world, has run its course. Nothing stays the same. And bottom line, what we're talking about is energy. And energy is always in motion, but a given form of energy, namely that social compact in this country – it really got a name with the New Deal under President Franklin Roosevelt – and that social compact that promised and guaranteed a basic foundation of security and services for most, for most, we said all but it never was for all, for most people in American society. So we had a vibrant middle class, we had some movement on the part of minorities, really not a lot, they stayed the permanent poor class, but they accepted what they were given, given where they came from, which was slavery and the great migrations from the south to the north. And that went along ok until the last... towards the end of the 20th century, where the enormous income disparity and segregation of groups – socioeconomically as well as racially and culturally – began to take place. And that compact no longer was viable. So for example, in the last campaign, both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump promised the disenfranchised, the unemployed white, particularly male, populations in the rust belt and the breadbasket of the country, Appalachia, that they were going to bring those jobs back – manufacturing jobs and mining jobs, and so forth. Each of them knew, each of them knew, that was not possible. Those jobs are gone and they're not coming back. And what's different now is that those people, the people who were affected, saw through the political hyperbole and the political correctness to the fact that a) it was a lie and b) it was not sustainable. And most of them realized that they will not be getting those jobs back. And that released a lot of anger and a lot of pushback. And slowly, not quite yet, slowly there is coming to be a consciousness that the old compact is no longer viable. It's crumbling.

Dr. Dave: There seems to be some version of this going on across Europe as well.

Dr. Dave: There seems to be some version of this going on across Europe as well.

Jerome: Yes, indeed.

Dr. Dave: I don't know whether to say coincidentally or synchronistically, I've recently decided to make up for a hole in my own education and started reading Howard Zinn's *The People's History of the United States*. I'm sure you're familiar with it. It's been a real eye-opener for me, even as an "educated person," to discover that this country from the very beginning has been run by wealthy people serving their interests. Native Americans and African Americans, who were brought over as slaves, and servants who came here, these people were all very very very disenfranchised, were not included in the Constitution when they talked about "we the people" and "liberty for all" and all of that. So this really looks like... you know, you can see the long arc of this.

Jerome: That's a characteristic of the collective unconscious, you were asking about that. So, the roots of that began here – I'm talking about recently, in terms of the recent manifestation – and now we see it unfolding all across Europe. And the perceived reality that's been there for the last seventy, eighty years is now fraying at the seams everywhere. And that's a characteristic of the collective unconscious, where you see a phenomenon that's not only happening here, wherever here is at the moment, manifest elsewhere within the collective unconscious, particularly of western civilization.

Dr. Dave: Now speaking of the collective unconscious, you've characterized Trump as an "agent" of the collective unconscious, but you're careful to say he's an agent but not the cause.

Jerome: Right.

Dr. Dave: What do you mean by that?

Jerome: Well, I mean that he is literally an agent. So he has been the voice – and incidentally has told us so: "I'm your voice" – he's the voice of the dissolution of the sociopolitical compact that we've had with ourselves and particularly with Europe, and the breakup of that system. And he articulates it in a very dysfunctional way. At the same time, it's pretty clear that his understanding of what comes out of his mouth is minimal. His understanding of politics is minimal, he's had no training – I don't know that he's ever had a course in political science. His understanding is nowhere and his interest is nowhere.

Dr. Dave: So is this the collective unconscious speaking through him? Speaking some sort of truth through him?

Jerome: It's speaking a truth, and the immediate truth, if we look at what's going on, is a dismantling, the immediate truth is a dismantling of the compact that we have known. That's what we're experiencing and that's why everybody is so shaken up by it. Because it's like the soil that we're standing on is crumbling at our feet.

Dr. Dave: When you say, "everybody" though, aren't there people who feel well served by Donald Trump and they're happy, to some extent, so far?

Jerome: It's interesting you use the word "happy." I wonder about that... a kind of satisfaction and schadenfreude, because most of them, most of them, what they feel primarily is betrayed. And that doesn't lead to a feeling of happiness with Trump. It does lead to a feeling of retribution and schadenfreude.

Dr. Dave: One thing that you've written is, "for me, Donald Trump was the necessary scalpel to lance the residual abscess of bigotry, misogyny, sexism, sociopathic greed, and callousness of the human spirit that our culture still carries."

scalpel to lance the residual abscess of bigotry, misogyny, sexism, homophobic greed, and callousness of the human spirit that our culture still carries.”

Jerome: Yeah, very definitely.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, so that’s [inaudible] to the “shadow” of our culture that you referred to earlier.

Jerome: It is indeed. It is indeed. And let’s remind ourselves that when Barack Obama was elected, which was a profound moment in American history, it was not twenty four hours before the Republican establishment came out and stated openly that, our job is to see that he has a failed prejudi... interesting slip on my part... a failed presidency, before he took any action at all as President. In my slip, I started to say “prejudice,” and I think that was the background for it, that on a deep psychological level, having a black president was intolerable for a large segment of the population, including people who thought themselves that they didn’t carry any prejudice.

Dr. Dave: Elsewhere you write, “in the selling of the American Dream, shadow elements of that dream were not talked about and were manipulatively passed over, major ones being racism and white supremacy, classism, religious discrimination, the justification of enormous greed and the elevation of the corporation as an almost invincible competitor with the rights of the individual, the costs of job loss in the wake of globalization, increasing disparity between the ultra-rich, the rich, and the rest of society.” So very compactly there, you’ve kind of summarized a lot of the situation.

Jerome: Yeah, and if we think about it in terms of how the collective unconscious works, here we have the election of a back president, I mean a truly extraordinary moment in American history, with everyone anticipating that the next *progressive* step would be the election of the first woman president. And what did we get? We got a president who was the most misogynist of any president in history. We got one who was most provocative in terms of people of color. We got one whose compassion, capacity for empathy, is pretty close to zero. And so we went from one extreme to the total opposite. When you have vacillations – it’s not vacillations, it’s really whipsawing – between extreme poles like that, that’s a very clear sign, a symptom one might say, of the collective unconscious manifesting itself within the collective psyche. And again, Donald Trump doesn’t have any understanding of that role that he’s playing as agent, spokesperson for the collective unconscious, nor does he care. What he cares about is his own image.

Dr. Dave: I’m going to quote you to yourself again: “Although the Donald Trump that we see exhibits profound psychopathology, the forces that he gathers to himself and those that he stirs up in the body politic, and not only the American collective but his impact on the world, is as stunning as it is terrifying. These characteristics suggest the prominence of archetypal dynamics at play and a deep eruption at the level of the collective unconscious.”

Jerome: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. You know, it’s hard for me not to reference Hitler and Mussolini, although that will be offensive to some listeners probably.

Jerome: But why not be offensive? Why not?

Dr. Dave: Yeah. Good point.

Jerome: Because it’s what’s happening, and that is and has been I think one of the most potentially destructive characteristics of the American shadow, namely, political correctness and not being willing to call a spade a spade. And we’re paying dearly.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I think you’re right. And we have historical records going back before

correctness and not being willing to call a spade a spade. And we're paying dearly.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. I think you're right. And we have historical records going back before Donald Trump came on the scene that show clearly that both Hitler and Mussolini felt like they were the voice of something larger, that they were the voice of the people. And Trump is saying pretty much the same thing.

Jerome: He is saying that and of course the thing that drives him crazy – one of the things that drives him crazy – is the data that come in from various polls that consistently show that he is not representing the people, a majority of people. He is representing an alienated minority, who I think it is time for them to be seen and have a voice, although they are disenfranchised and likely to stay disenfranchised. But he has never represented the voice of the people that is close to a majority. And the fact that he keeps insisting and lying about it says something about his inability to live in a world of reality. And again, he's an agent of something that he does not understand that he represents.

Dr. Dave: Right. You kind of note that, in a strange kind of way, he gives us a gift or two. You write, "Donald Trump in his short reign as President is provoking more consciousness-raising and conscious reflection and debate and dialogue than any politician in memory."

Jerome: I think that's true. And somewhere I refer to him as the "Consciousness Raiser-in-Chief."

Dr. Dave: Yes, you do.

Jerome: And it's a great paradox. I'd love to get that phrase to him, that paragraph to him, because it would really get to him and perplex him. But he has provoked dialogue: all of these town hall meetings where congressmen and senators are being confronted by constituents, the major theme being, "why aren't you doing your job." There's a debate going on at all levels with regard to, "what about the people of the rust belt and the middle of the country?" Do they have a legitimate beef? Were they lied to? Were they forgotten? The Democratic Party has experienced that upheaval as a train wreck. I just noted the other day that the new chairman of the Democratic Party has asked for the resignation of the entire staff of the party, which is an indication that there is recognition for a whole new restructuring and reframing and reassessment of not only the policies of the Democratic Party, but literally its identity. The Democratic Party has always represented, they would say, the middle class. But the middle class has disappeared to a large extent, and there's lots of data to support that contention. So there is a lot of debate, open debate, going on between political factions and within political groups themselves that was not happening before Trump was elected. And it's healthy.

Dr. Dave: It's healthy, yeah. It is. Earlier, you were talking about psychic energy and I think you were alluding to the principle of entropy that you've also written about, and it holds that, "energy loss is a natural phenomenon: hot coffee turns cold, dust accumulates, machines deteriorate, used or not. For us who tend to be addicted to known order and fixed reality," you say, "entropy intrudes as if it were a disorder, as if something is wrong, that it should not be. But entropy is a natural phenomenon and is essential in bringing about new paradigms of creation and life. Trickster energy," here we get into the archetype, you say, "trickster energy appears destructive to us because we naturally resist shifts in known order. In fact, trickster energy may be paving the way for the demise of a form of order that has run its course and is no longer viable."

Jerome: Right. That's a pretty extreme statement but I think is the case. Elsewhere, and in a somewhat different context, not totally, I talk about how there is now an evolution, a movement, psychically, from a more Newtonian view of the world, where reality is fixed and things have their own static definition, more towards the quantum spectrum,

in a somewhat different context, not totally, I talk about how there is now an evolution, a movement, psychically, from a more Newtonian view of the world, where reality is fixed and things have their own static definition, more towards the quantum spectrum, which is not a world of fixed realities, it's a world of probabilities. And that's not what we have now. Einstein referred to some of the early manifestations of the quantum world as "spooky." You know, he said, things changing, things separated from each other, changing, he was talking about the principle of entanglement in quantum physics where, if you have two particles of the same substance at a distance, a change in one is reflected in the other even though there is no direct connection between them. And he referred to that as "spooky." And what we mean by spooky, when we use the term, is that it doesn't fit our rational view of the world and how the world works. And it's unnerving. It's very, very unnerving. But I think that's where we are. We are transitioning from a more fixed view, Newtonian view, of the world – I call it from the dominance of the Dominion Psyche – to one where there's compensation by what I call the Reciprocity Psyche, which is more like the quantum world, so the collective psyche is not so out of balance, so one-sided.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, Jung's psychology... he was dialoguing with physicists towards the end of his life and it seems to me his psychology is kind of a quantum psychology, if you will, one that admits of these sorts of possibilities.

Jerome: Of the possibilities, yeah. Yeah, he was open to that, and that part of Jung, earlier in his life, was greatly misunderstood. Some people said he was crazy; that the kind of reality he was alluding to simply didn't exist.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, you've got your book *Borderland Consciousness*, in which you describe your work with patients who are giving voice, really, in their symptoms, in their dreams, to something that's going on in the collective rather than... they might have, you kind of are careful to point out that they may have things that we would recognize as psychopathology but sort of entwined with that, also these deeper messages from the collective unconscious. And I'm thinking that Jung was somebody who lived in what you've described as borderline consciousness.

Jerome: *Borderland* consciousness. I was conscious of that when I set up that confusion, because it forces us, particularly clinicians, to think about the difference between a *borderline* personality and a *borderland* personality. And the *borderline* personality is reflective of personal pathology, where life really doesn't work for them in a wholesome way, versus *borderland* personality, which – there are a lot of characteristics to *borderland* personality but I'll just refer to the one – *borderland* personalities have a very intimate, conscious, active connection with nature, very similar to the Native American. Traditional Native Americans are never out of touch with their connection to nature. We are. We take nature and Mother Earth, for example, and transpose it all into matter, so that we see it as spiritless and having no value other than what it can serve for us, which is now, in part, why we have a global warming crisis and a crisis of black lung disease in Appalachia, and so on and so forth. There's an absence of both empathy and spirit-connection within our culture that's been taken over by greed and, let's say, personal aggrandizement. And in compensation for that, the collective unconscious is now manifesting more and more of the characteristics that we do see in the Native American psyche, in the dominant culture. So, what I've discovered in terms of *borderland* characteristics, I discovered in my non-native patients as opposed to native patients, of whom I have one or two – I never have had many – but I was able to recognize what I was seeing because of my experience with those cultures.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, with their more holistic involvement with the environment.

Jerome: Yeah.

Dr. Dave: I've had some involvement with a local climate protection campaign, and they've had some success here in California in terms of promoting alternate sources of energy – solar and so on – but there is a growing sense of alarm, both because of what

Dr. Dave: I've had some involvement with a local climate protection campaign, and they've had some success here in California in terms of promoting alternate sources of energy – solar and so on – but there is a growing sense of alarm, both because of what Trump is doing to dismantle our climate protection measures that have been put in place but also because there is a sense that we humans don't seem to react strongly enough to the rational arguments of something that's in the distance that we can't see. And so these people are starting to think that there needs to be a religion, or some kind of an emotional-religious appeal to people to get them on board. To me, that sounds a lot like a shamanic viewpoint. And there are some very large pockets of interest in shamanism these days.

Jerome: I would say, I think we have to be careful in using that word because in western culture of course, shamanism is very far from our very rational grounded view of reality and healing and life. However, and as a result of that confusion, we tend to dump anything that doesn't fit our understanding of that rational approach, we dump it into the category of shamanism. Shamanism, though, has a very specific definition in terms of healing, for example, and it's one that almost always is reliant upon some kind of mind-altering, brain-affecting substance like Ayahuasca. And it's where the shaman also uses – some people would say magic, some people would say transpersonal, or transrational is my word, that's a word that I coined – transrational techniques to heal. Most Native American cultures are not reliant on substance in their traditional approaches. What they rely on is a psychic connection between themselves and nature, the cornerstone of which is respect. And respect is not a very potent word in our language and culture – that is, western language and culture. We throw it around a lot. But in the Native American world, it is a cornerstone of the soul relationship between our species and all of life. And for example, in Navajo and I suspect probably all Native American languages, there is no word for animal, because we're all animals. In western culture, we have the word animal to distinguish ourselves. We're not animal, we're human. And in Native American culture, we're the five-fingered, we're the two-legged, amongst other animals, amongst the buffalo and the birds, and what have you. And that's a whole shift in attitude and relationship. And one could refer to that as a religious attitude, and incidentally Navajo language does not have a word for religion, because what we call religion and healing and spirituality are all part of a whole. And so it is their life-way. And so the word respect reflects a different psyche, and I think that's what you're alluding to. Whereas religion per se gets into dogma or philosophy, things that are debated and can be chosen and left behind. There is a certain reciprocity at the core of the connection between our species and all of life, from the Native American point of view. And if we had that, then we wouldn't be so quick to blow off the tops of mountains when mining and have all of that waste dumped into rivers and poisoning water and all of the destruction that goes on there. And that's where the borderland personality comes in because you and I are talking about that as something that's not a good idea, a good practice, a good policy, but the borderland personality feels it. And when I say feels it, I mean in their cells, in their bones. And in extreme cases, it leads to environmental illness, where it makes them actually ill.

Dr. Dave: Yeah, yeah. Reading another passage from what you've written: "The insufficiently recognized conundrum, in my view, is that we have not had the psychological, political, or scientific tools with which to diagnose and treat the archetypal dynamics inherent in collective madness." And you go on to say, "this was Jung's lament at the end of his life: how to apply his revolutionary theories on the collective level and pointedly within the realm of politics. As Jungians, I believe this is our imperative today."

Jerome: Right. I do. I think that Jungian theory has some specific theories like the archetypes in general but specifically the shadow and the collective unconscious. Those theoretical constructs are indispensable, from my point of view, to the survival of our species. Science, which is the product of our left-brain genius, and science is genius for sure; the pinnacle in many respects of our creative self, but it has become overspecialized. So one of the reasons we have a climate crisis that threatens our

sure; the pinnacle in many respects of our creative self, but it has become overspecialized. So one of the reasons we have a climate crisis that threatens our survival is because of the advances of science. And so we have the paradox of our creative genius giving us a standard of living unknown in history, and medicine, for example, where one might say miracles happen, on the one hand, and on the other hand, nuclear energy, nuclear plants, coal plants, all that stuff, is polluting the very essentials of life that we need to sustain ourselves. And most importantly, we do not have the self-control to resist what I call the “of course syndrome.” And the “of course syndrome” is one where there is an immediate profit or perceived gain and for example, with Trump reversing a lot of Obama’s environmental rules and for example, mileage requirements, miles per gallon on automobiles. The automobile industry didn’t wait five minutes before they wrote to Trump and said, well would you roll back the standard for mileage on automobile manufacturing? And what that comes out of is immediate gain in terms of reducing the cost of applying those standards. And yeah, that would result in short-term profit increase for stockholders and so forth, and all the while may push us over the edge in terms of surviving global climate change.

Dr. Dave: I’ve been heartened to read that there are some factories and industry leaders who say, no we’ve found it makes economic sense for us to follow those practices that help to reduce carbon emissions, and so on.

Jerome: Right, and that’s a faction, a growing faction – I’m heartened by it, too, as you are – it’s a growing faction of that group that does have the capacity to look beyond the immediate gain.

Dr. Dave: Yeah. My wife calls that the “shiny nickel syndrome,” what you call the “of course.”

Jerome: Oh I like that.

Dr. Dave: She talks about the “shiny nickel syndrome” of following a path of shiny nickels and picking them up.

Jerome: Yeah, tell her I may steal that from her.

Dr. Dave: Ok, I will tell her that. She’ll be gratified.

Jerome: it reminds me of John D. Rockefeller in the ‘20s. You may have seen some of the film clips of him. He would go around and he would hand out dimes. He carried a pocket-full of dimes. And of course he was famous, as he was the first billionaire, I guess, in this country. And so there were people who wanted to see and touch what a billionaire looked like. And he would hand them dimes.

Dr. Dave: Uh-huh. Well, a lot of what we’ve been talking about is pretty bleak. We just did touch on one sign of hope. What keeps you going? Do you have any prescription for us? What do we need to do to get through this?

Jerome: Well, several things, and I am hopeful. Yeah, there is a lot of bleakness in what’s been said. I would say the main thing for now is that we have to hold on and to realize that what Donald Trump represents – as reprehensible as he is – is a truth, there is a certain degree of truth to what he says. And he is speaking the message, let us say, of a segment, disenfranchised segment, of the American population that needs to be heard. We are not going to progress or grow well by segregating the “ins” and the “outs.” And our social compact has to be with what was said in the preamble to the Constitution, it’s of all people, and so he is addressing or speaking to, let’s put it that way, or being the voice of a message that needs to be heard that none of us likes hearing. And he is shoving our nose in it. And if he wasn’t shoving our nose in it, we wouldn’t be hearing it because we haven’t been hearing it for the last, pick your number, ten, twenty, fifty, sixty, seventy years. And we are now talking about it. He’s forcing us to do that. He is

showing our nose in it. And if he wasn't showing our nose in it, we wouldn't be hearing it because we haven't been hearing it for the last, pick your number, ten, twenty, fifty, sixty, seventy years. And we are now talking about it. He's forcing us to do that. He is raising the consciousness of the American electorate, and our culture in general, more than any politician in history. And we have to hold our nose while we do that but it's a message that we really need to hear and take in. And if we do, if we do, if we can really do that, enough of us, then I think there will be a major shift in the nature of our political process and what I call, what I see that Native Americans have at the core of their relationship to all of life, which is respect, what your wife calls a bypassing of the "shiny nickel syndrome." And it's a re-infusion of spirit. And along with spirit comes an ethical imperative. Without spirit there is no ethical imperative, there is only expedience.

Dr. Dave: I think that's maybe a strong place for us to wrap this up.

Jerome: So I think we have to hang in, yes. I think we have to hang in and look for where this process is beginning to leave us. It's still early. It's still early. We've got a couple years of pretty ugly stuff ahead of us. But if we hang with it, we'll be ok. Speaking of which, if you have not seen it, I want to recommend – and you can get it on the web – the University of Pennsylvania just dedicated a school in the name of ex-Vice President Biden. And at the dedication he gave a speech that is truly – you want to talk about hope, anybody needs hope should get that speech up on the web – it is truly remarkable.

Dr. Dave: Ok, well I will definitely look for that. Particularly, the University of Pennsylvania is my alma mater from my undergraduate days. And Jerome S. Bernstein, I want to thank you for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

Jerome: Thank you, and thanks for giving me this platform.

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