

# Where Janov is Wrong

Pain isn't 'all there is'.

Emotions can all *become* pain, just as laughter can come out of tears, pathos can become bathos (1), and hurt can become art.

The process is two-way, optional, and reversible. Or as they say in Reciprocal Counselling, tears 'move up the ladder of emotions' (2) to become anger, and then a laugh of joy.

To say 'it's all pain' is to *reduce* - to reduce (3) everything to one thing - and even worse, to throw it all away, since 'that's all pain is for, isn't it?'

Question: would you want the whole emotional expression of your life to be *just* that you cried out all your tears and pain?

Would you want to hear, 'I'll never paint another Mona Lisa 'cos now I know I only want my mother back (howl, howl)?'

Would you want to live in a world where no-one ever smiled again - because they hadn't primalled enough?

(I can just see Janov saying, What have you got to smile about?)

Or in Transactional Analysis terms, is Janov's life position 'Don't *ever* be happy - it's a con'?

I think so.

He chooses to make pain 'all there is'. But it isn't.

Eric Robbie

## References

1. As Arthur Koestler says in **The Act of Creation**
  2. As Harvey Jackins says in **The Manual for Reciprocal Counselling**.
  3. When you reduce, as in any other kind of reductionism, 'be-come' becomes 'be-make' as Abraham Maslow might say. See **The Jonah Complex in The Farther Reaches of Human Nature**.
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