

FOG OF EMOTIONS

IT CAN KILL

One of the two major themes of the Clarity of Purpose & Thought then Action program is how our *ego's defense mechanisms* create a fog of emotions that cause us to make self-destructive decisions. The second major theme is the Freudian model for how our psyche operates: A group of primal and *instinctual drives* which reside in the part of the psyche known as the *id* are driving us on to fulfill their animalistic goals. At the same time, in our psyche's *superego* reside a set of rules taught to us from birth about socially acceptable behaviors. It is the *ego's* role to broker a deal between the desires of the *id* and the rules of the *superego* that creates our emotional turmoil. The good news is that this turmoil at times makes us feel more or less miserable and makes us sometimes wonder if we will ever find happiness in our life and the bad news is that in some cases it can kill us.

Although some may find this whole notion of the *instinctual drives, id, ego, superego, and defense mechanisms* somewhat theoretical and perhaps just some far-flung ideas, it is the case where they cause suicidal actions that shows us in a stark fashion just how real these concepts are. AIDS, we know how to catch it and we know it will eventually kill us. Yet today, people who understand this lethal cause and effect continue to make decisions that give them this death sentence, a very dense fog indeed.

Sex is the most primal and *instinctual* of all the drives residing in the *id*. Whether for animals in the struggle for existence or the earliest humans in their struggle for existence; if their genes did not contain a set of programs that caused them to mate and to rear their offspring until the age when they too would mate, they never would have made

it through very many generations. In the struggle of survival of the fittest, the most prime directives are those behaviors related to sex.

At no time does our *id* create a more dense fog of emotions that disrupt our decision making than during sex-related behaviors. In particular for mating, once initiated, with all the sensory signals as bright and shiny as possible putting the gas pedal to the floor, mating will see its way through to completion, all else is shut out of our consciousness. We know the dangers of certain mating practices and their consequences, yet some proceed on to complete the act in such a way as to give themselves a death sentence. Societies teachings that reside in the *superego* are ignored. Full steam ahead to our eventual death.

It is this extreme case that shows us just how correct and powerful is Freud's model for accurately describing how the human psyche operates. In the less extreme case, throughout our daily lives, the *id* is trying to fulfill its *instinctual drives* under circumstances where these drives are not as pumped up with all the sensory signals that excite them as just described. It is in these vast majority of our decision making circumstances that the *ego* is allowed to find a way to satisfy both the *id's* and the *superego's* needs. A *sublimation* is worked out and the left-over *neuroses* play their role in controlling our lives.

This description of just how potent our *id* can be has probably raised in some reader's minds a fascinating question and it is one of the major questions of the behavioral sciences field: Why is it that some people are capable of disciplining their *id* and using safe-sex practices whereas others are not? This of course overlaps with the larger question of the relatively unrestrained *id* in criminal behavior through to the well-

restrained *id* in the case of those who in any one of a number of situations, both personal and business, seem able to discipline themselves to act in their own long-term best interests. Are some people born with the ability for self-discipline and others not or can this ability to restrain the impulse of the *id* be learned? A fascinating question with significant implications for not just understanding individual behavior but for the lawful progress of society as a whole.