

# Cognitive Dissonance Rules

11-18-16

Distress caused by cognitive dissonance may arise in a political discussion when one feels compelled to argue a position that is contrary to their beliefs. There are three ways to relieve the distress – change ones belief so that it's in accordance with what one says; stop saying things that are contrary to ones beliefs; rationalize – distort reality just enough to convince oneself that they remain a good person who will never violate their sacred principles.

## Debate between a Trump basher and a Clinton basher

TB: Trump is a racist because he still says the Central Park Five are guilty and should be in jail or worse.

CB: (Distressed because, not only was there not a scintilla of evidence against the five and the actual confessed perpetrator is in jail, he is not allowed to say Trump was an idiot to say that, nor does he want Trump's racism attached to him. So he avoids a direct response.) Clinton is a racist because at the time she said we must clear the streets of super predators – meaning: black youths perceived as unusually dangerous.

TB: (Distressed because of the bogus notion of a super predator problem and that her husband went on to sign into law many provisions aimed at the oppression of blacks, including an additional 100,000 cops to do it. Must change the subject.) Clearly Trump is a loose cannon who says scary things and then denies saying them even though they've been recorded.

CB: (Distressed because a man who blurts out the first words that come to mind can be rather frightening. Must attack the other side.) Hasn't your current president assigned to himself the extra-judicial right to murder Americans with drones? Doesn't that scare you?

TB: (Much distressed because of a sudden thought – Holy Cow! – the president of the United States is no different than the president of the Philippines. Must move to safer ground.) Trump is a crook. He enriches himself by pocketing profits while running his investments into bankruptcy, stiffing creditors, then starting them up again.

CB: (Distressed but works up nerve to actually respond to the statement.) President elect Trump's business practices strictly adhere to the laws of the land. (Oops – I think I just said that the entire system is corrupt. That's what I get for being ballsy. Should have just said – he is one of the most successful businessman, blah, blah. Must knock the ball into the other court.) What about Clinton receiving huge fees from Goldman Sachs in exchange for a few brief speeches?

TB: (Distressed but very pleased the fees weren't called bribes. Time to bring up Putin.) Trump is all lovey-dovey with Putin, one of our most dangerous enemies and the man who stole Crimea from Ukraine.

CB: (Distressed because it's unclear how much the demonizing of Putin has taken hold. Wisely chooses to focus on peace. With all the endless wars going on the American people are not inclined to want another far more dangerous one.) The people of Crimea voted overwhelming for independence. Putin's involvement was far less intrusive than the West's ripping Kosovo out of Serbia.

TB: (Distressed because it was a good response – never thought a Trump supporter would have heard of Kosovo. Time to play the economy card.) We are presently in a shaky recovery from a deep recession. Trump's call for high tariffs to supposedly protect American jobs would surely send the economy into a steep decline.

CB: (Distressed because a beggar-thy-neighbor trade war would be as disastrous as it is idiotic) Protecting the home market is the norm during slow growth periods, besides, Trump's major economic announcement was to call for a massive infrastructure program.)

TB: (Distressed because rabid Clinton supporter Paul Krugman has been calling for fiscal stimulus only to be snubbed and now the despised Trump wants to actually do it.)

(moderator intervenes)

Moderator: It's not at all clear if you support the things your candidates have said and done in their lives, or just support the candidates for some other reason.

The general perception of Trump is that he is a hypocritical anti-Mexican xenophobe blaming the undocumented for taking away American jobs and being drug lords when it's America that has done such a thorough wrecking job on the Mexican economy via Nafta that millions of Mexicans flee as a matter of survival; and that it's wrong to characterize all Muslims as terrorists or potential terrorists when the few that are terrorists are derived from groups created under the auspices of the CIA to fight the Russians in Afghanistan and receive the bulk of their operational funding from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states all of which are our close allies, and that America's systematic wrecking of predominantly Muslim nations -- Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somalia -- are really crimes that should be universally condemned; and that he is an anti-black racist straight from his KKK loving daddy; and finally, a bloated misogynist pig born into millions who thinks he has a natural right to assault women.

As for Clinton, the general perception is that she's a slimy, devious character from the days when she was a Goldwater supporting high schooler; that she thinks nothing of taking bribes from influence peddlars -- like from chicken king Tyson back in 1978 Arkansas or Goldman Sachs in later years in NYC; that she is progressive democrat of the sort who profitably sits on the board of anti-union Walmart; that she was the brains behind her shitbag of a husband while he served as president; and that when she served in high level government office she supported a coup in Honduras against the elected president because he said something nice about Venezuela; and that she gave material support for the ongoing crimes against humanity in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and took an SS aficionado's enjoyment in observing the torture and murder of Libya's Gaddafi.

So here is my question to our Trump and Clinton supporters -- which of the critical points of conduct in your candidates do you actually support?

(pause)

Clinton Basher: Really, I just hate Clinton more than Trump.

Trump Basher: And Trump disgusts me more than the almost as vile Clinton.

Moderator: Then I don't see why you are willing to politically attach yourselves to people you mostly hate when you are close enough to unite in opposition to both of them.

(both bashers show symptoms of a newly discovered enlightenment)

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As for the economy this week -- industrial production was down for the 14th month in a row, but retail sales were up more than expected.

Bonds are being bashed because suddenly the world thinks a dumb-ass, loose cannon reactionary will succeed where masses of brilliance have failed and boost the economy into inflationary growth.

The dollar continues to eat up the value of other currencies with the Euro once again making a run at being worth only a dollar.

And the markets threw caution, along with any shred of the rationality as perceived by the notorious economists/idiots Hayek and Friedman, and went into full-fledged sturm und drang mode by breaking or approaching new highs.

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