

Democratic Consciousness

The Struggle Between our Inner
Dictator and our Inner Democrat

By Alex Riel



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The Struggle Between our Inner Dictator and our Inner Democrat

"Events in the world are unpredictable, but it seems that in the coming years, we will experience greater changes than most of us have seen in our lifetime. The purpose of this article is to provide insight into human consciousness behind the events unfolding in the world. When one realizes that democracy is about consciousness, it becomes possible to navigate and stay motivated in the turbulent world we likely face ahead."

It can be difficult to maintain an optimistic outlook in a world where democracy is caught between the three largest military powers ruled by dictators (the USA, China, and Russia). I will argue that the global situation actually fosters democracy, as it is no longer just about voting rights and maximizing citizens' welfare but also about bringing a new level of consciousness to people worldwide. It has become clear that in the West, we have lived with the belief that democracy is good because it brings peace and prosperity to citizens, and we gladly vote for those who benefit our wallets.

However, democracy also requires identifying with all people on the planet, and perhaps even with all life. These are extremely high standards that democratic individuals try to live up to, which explains why the democratic mindset is fragile.

Throughout most of human history, our minds have been dominated by three inner dictators shaping consciousness: *the survival dictator*, *the egocentric dictator*, and *the ideological dictator*. For many, family survival comes before anything else, and this has been the case throughout most of human history. The egocentric dictator is driven by desires, where happiness is anything that benefits oneself. The ideological dictator is dominated by an absolutist ideology, where everything and everyone are mere means to achieve religious or nationalistic goals. These three inner dictators exist in all humans, though in some, they dominate their entire consciousness.

Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, and Xi Jinping are, in their own ways, products of these three dictators, having grown up in environments where survival is best ensured by being egocentric and nationalistic (you can consider the similarities and differences in how their three inner dictators are composed). Here, we find the key to understanding dictators' behavior.

Fortunately, a process is also occurring through three inner democrats in human consciousness: *the freedom democrat*, *the equality democrat*, and *the integrated democrat*. Freedom democrats focus on the freedom of all people worldwide, while the equality democrats focus on promoting social equality among all. Politically, we call them liberalism and socialism. The polarization between them can be expected to lessen as dictators attempt to set the world agenda.

However, both are still only *developmental democrats*, as they are often hijacked by one or more inner dictators, creating various psychological conflicts and contradictions in the mind. Democracies remain fragile because they primarily consist of developmental democrats and individuals dominated by one or more dictators.

What truly develops democratic consciousness? Can it be taught through education and books? I believe it helps, but above all, *it is experiences with dictatorial consciousness that create the desire for democratic consciousness.*

As dictatorships around the world threaten democracy, we realize that democracy is more than just financial benefits—it is about freedom and equality as indispensable values. Thus, dictators themselves motivate us to develop democratic consciousness. Understanding the evolution of the mind becomes essential, as the dismantling of our inner dictators creates the democratic mind. Consider your own life. *Can you recognize your inner dictators? Are you aware of how they still influence you? If you struggle to identify them, simply ask some of your close friends.*

Democratic consciousness is growing globally, as the need for personal freedom increases in response to dictators restricting people's lives. Over time, Chinese, Russians, and likely also more Americans will desire more democracy. We see it in the defense of truth, which is under attack on social media and in the press. We also see it in global trade, which binds countries together. We would much rather enjoy each other's food and visit each other's countries than fight one another.

Democratization is thus an ongoing process in all human minds, but it remains fragile and vulnerable to being hijacked by our inner dictators, especially when life challenges us.

People and societies are evolving to become less dictatorial and more democratic, but this is a slow process that only becomes evident when viewed over long historical periods. Ask any historian about the influence of dictators

in the past compared to today. Additionally, it appears that a new form of democrat is emerging in human consciousness.

Integrated democrats are individuals who are nearly free from their inner dictators and have developed democratic consciousness (they acknowledge their dictators but are not hijacked by them).

The consciousness of integrated democrats is currently found in only a small number of people who manage to identify with all life. Their focus is on the well-being of the entire living planet. They are influenced by *the Overview Effect*, first described by author Frank White regarding astronauts' experiences when they see Earth from space. From that perspective, the blue planet has no borders and appears as a shared home for all living beings. The Overview Effect can be transformative, sometimes carrying a spiritual dimension. The integrated democrat sees dictators and democrats as part of the same process and recognizes connections where others see contradictions. Dictators reflect aspects of ourselves.

In a world of integrated democrats, wars would no longer exist because dictators would no longer exist. Dictators are simply part of an evolutionary process that must be played out before a peaceful world can emerge. Dictators are not suited for a future with approximately 10 billion people. Precisely because integrated democrats are conscious of their inner dictators, they avoid being hijacked by others' inner dictators. They can also analyze the composition of dictators and democrats within individuals and cultures. Integrated democrats seek what is true and good for all people and all life. Everyone can use these ideals and train themselves to develop democratic consciousness, reducing the risk of being hijacked by dictators.

The dismantling of our inner dictators and the development of the democratic mind occur through a so-called *direct democracy*, which fosters democratic consciousness, whereas the current *representative democracy* allows our inner dictators to thrive, often unnoticed. Representative democracy functions from the top through politics and regulations, while direct democracy functions from the bottom through relationships in everyday life. Direct democracy thus begins with you and what you do with your life. The challenge is to create greater coherence between democracy from above and below. It is the divide between these that dictators exploit to hijack people's inner dictators. Dictatorships arise where the majority does not directly engage in democracy or where dictators successfully hijack our inner dictators (promising us gold and green forests). Here, truth is the first casualty, and love the next.

But how bad is the situation, really?

Make no mistake, dictators both hate and fear democracies. Resisting this will likely demand more from us than ever before in modern times. Until now, representative democracy has ensured peace, but now the democratic mind is needed at all levels of society. The world will not continue as usual. But what can you and I do in a world where powerful dictators are rising? Observe where democracy is struggling around you, connect with others in democratic projects, and participate where your skills are needed.

Where can you contribute to more direct democracy?

Ultimately, it is about defending truth and love, the essence of a democracy free from dictators. It is, however, the mix of our inner democrats and inner dictators that makes life complex and challenging.

This is a time when individual actions matter more than we are used to in representative democracies.

The coming challenges will reveal whether our inner democrats are ready to rise to the occasion. But it is also an opportunity to experience how life truly gains meaning when one participates in projects that concern the future of all humanity.

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Best Regards

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