

PREMIUM VIEWPOINTS

Why I Left the Left



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October 13, 2022 Updated: October 17, 2022

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Commentary

In 1998, I moved to Los Angeles, and like many young women, I had dreams of something bigger than the small-town life I had experienced up until then. I had a desire to rebel against my rather strict upbringing in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and my conservative education in rural Virginia. I didn't want to "go to school, get a job, get married, have kids," and put them in a nice house with a white picket fence. I didn't want to shuffle them to soccer practice and dance classes in a Range Rover. How boring. I wanted to be free.

I packed up my four-door powder blue Ford Taurus with the shifter on the right side of the wheel and rallied a friend to drive west with me from Birmingham, Alabama. The dread of another day behind a desk in a 9-to-5 job was intolerable. Four days later, I arrived at my apartment across from CBS Studios in West Hollywood. I was clueless and jobless and intentionally disconnected from any past that could define me. I was searching for something without knowing what that something was. I was perfect fodder for the progressive agenda.

I abandoned my past to recreate a life I saw as idyllic and quickly fell into all the tropes of a Los Angeles starlet. I got an agent and began acting classes. I worked all sorts of different jobs to support myself. But with no definitive direction, I was never able to save money or find stability, living mostly paycheck to paycheck. I was a “free spirit.”

I bounced from blue city to blue city—Los Angeles, New York, Austin, and back to Los Angeles—and traveled to countries around the world. I enshrined myself in every self-help book and spiritual practice I could. Sound baths, breathwork, yoga, meditation, journeys to India and sacred sites, crystals, reiki, endless retreats and yoga teacher trainings, and psychedelic voyages—these were my life. All in the name of evolving into a more conscious human. I even made a career of some of it.

While I was somewhat successful in my professional life as a fitness and wellness “personality,” my personal life was a mess. I became increasingly depressed, lonely, isolated, and self-obsessed. I lost any sense of who I truly was. I craved a sense of belonging and would bounce from group to group in search of a community in which I felt I fit. Some might call some of my associations cultish. Looking back, I would agree.

I became increasingly fragile. I hid in spiritual safety and used my “voice” to rally against all the travesties of the world, much like an “In this house, we believe” sign, ubiquitous on lawns throughout Los Angeles. Yet it was never me who needed to change. Rather, the world needed to conform to make me more comfortable. In some cases, it needed to be completely dismantled. The patriarchy needed to crumble. We all needed to become aware of our white fragility. If everyone were just more enlightened like I was, the world would be a better place. Any challenge to my ideology was someone else’s ignorance or inability to see “my truth.”

As it did for many people, my life began to shift in 2020. I began to take personal inventory and examine where I was going. While the rest of the world was safely sheltering, a series of cataclysmic events prompted me to rouse from the spiritual cave I had been hiding in. I realized how selfish I had become. I realized how much anger and resentment I was holding on to, despite all my attempts to “heal myself.” I realized how much I sought validation from the outside world. I began to take responsibility for my life and act on the things I wanted rather than trying to “manifest” them with positive affirmations and visualization.

Most importantly, I was called to the Christian faith and woke up from the “woke” spell that Los Angeles and the progressive narrative had cast. Jesus gave shape and form to my spirituality. It became a source of stability and comfort rather than volatility, angst, and reform. I returned to a sense of logos and reason that began to steady my pervasive and unpredictable emotional world. Jesus merged my head and heart together rather than asking me to abandon the former for the latter.

Having heart but using your head is a potent and empowering combination. The far left only wants to pull at your heartstrings, and if you don’t respond appropriately, which is the way they want you to, you’re a bad person. Thus, silence is violence, and any dissension from their idea of a good society is grounds for shame, reprimand, job removal, or extrication from the public sphere. Following the far left requires an abandonment of rational, clear, and critical thinking.

While the far left proselytizes about empowering people, it does anything but. It insists that you focus on all the ways in which you’re a victim because of any number of external identities, such as race, gender, sexual preference, age, disability, or geography—you name it, they’ll use it.

It peddles in grand abstractions, assuming belonging to any one of these categories means that you’re just like everyone else in that group. It’s never about the individual, someone with a unique history or cultural ties. It assigns a unilateral experience on what it means to be black or lesbian or Asian or any other external parameter progressives insist that one adopt. I’m a female, therefore I must accept that I’ve been a victim of toxic masculinity and systemic oppression by the patriarchy. I did that for a long time, despite the fact that it wasn’t true.

By today's pedagogy, I was successful not through any effort of my own, but because I was "pretty" and "white." At the same time, anything I didn't achieve was because I was discriminated against. I can't think of anything more disempowering.

The far left is neither grateful nor gracious. I consistently focused on what I didn't have. Rather than feel blessed by my upbringing, I was burdened by it and constantly fighting against it. I could only see my younger years through the lens of trauma and emotional neglect, even though, despite sometimes challenging situations, I lived a quite idyllic childhood. I was loved and cared for. I never went without.

Yet my Los Angeles gurus and therapists convinced me that my traumas constantly needed to be examined as opposed to accepting myself and my past as unique and flawed. There was always more inner work that I had to do to achieve an ideal life. I had to be polished to perfection, every judgmental error in my bones washed clean. I loathed confrontation and avoided it at all costs, yet I would simultaneously be agitated when people didn't understand what I was going through or my point of view. I rode a rollercoaster of emotions and expectations and insisted that everyone else cater to them.

For the left, the list of travesties that need to be overcome is relentless, and one is guilty until proven innocent. There will never be enough—enough social justice, enough equity, or enough change. Progressives are unyielding in their pursuit of a world perfected, despite the impossibility of such a utopia.

It's an exhausting way to live, and I'm thrilled to say I escaped the insanity. My relationship with both of my parents has improved significantly. I'm a more pleasant person to be around. I can listen without being constantly triggered. I don't take things personally and—gasp—my sense of humor returned! I'm filled with gratitude, and for the first time in my life, I'm excited about my future, despite the uncertainty of what that looks like.

I returned to school to receive a master's degree in public policy. I've become more educated on the roots of our country and returned to the ethics of responsibility and discipline I grew up on. I feel truly empowered not to change the world but to overcome obstacles that will inevitably be placed on my path. Most importantly, I found a love and self-respect that only comes from a true connection to God, not some vague never-ending cycle of self-help or political party. I'm more positive than when I endlessly repeated words of affirmation. I'm content. I'm at peace.

For those seeking as I was—those of you who feel lost or confused or like you don't belong—know this: You're looking for love in all the wrong places. The left will never fill the void inside. No person, institution, movement, or policy can. What they'll do is feed on your insecurities and self-doubt and convince you that they have the cure. They don't.

The world isn't a safe space. It can be dangerous, unfair, and quite cruel. So buckle up and enjoy the ride of life with all its speedbumps, potholes, detours, and dead ends. It can be a lot of fun when you accept who you—and others—are without trying to change everything and everyone to accommodate you. Look upward and inward rather than outside of you for the answers. Aim toward excellence and aspire to be the best version of yourself. Be inspired by others' success rather than tearing it down. If you truly want to change the world, start with yourself.

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