



## Tool Transcript

### Projection & Judgment

*In this call we tease apart projection and judgement using Jayson's perspectives, examples and definitions to find out what's really going on. We learn how to work with projection and judgement in an empowered way and how they can be useful in your relationships.*

Let's talk projection. This is a term that gets thrown around a lot these days and if you're in a relationship with someone who's somewhat familiar with therapeutic jargon, they might also throw this around you a lot, 'hey, you're just projecting' or, 'stop projecting.' My Wife and I, we met in grad school studying this stuff. Studying psychology and projection and everything and when we got together it was about three years of lots of projecting and analysing each other and throwing a bunch of stuff onto each other and trying to tease out the projections from what was really going on. That's why it's important to know about projection.

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I'm going to keep it simple, as simple as possible because I believe keeping things simple here with projection is going to help you and help you use it to your advantage. So, let's look at the definition when you google projection, there's a few definitions that show up. Wikipedia's is, 'psychological projection is a theory in psychology in which humans defend themselves against unpleasant impulses by denying their existence in themselves, whilst attributing to others.' For example, a person who is rude may constantly accuse others of being rude. Okay, that's like the classic definition of projection as well as a great example for

what people think projection is, which that is projection to a degree but there is a lot more to it.

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So, another common one is, 'I'm feeling angry inside but I'm not in touch with it and I'm tracking my partner and I sense that she's slamming doors and her tone of voice has changed and so I'm seeing her anger really clearly.' So I might say, 'You seem angry,' and that's what happens a lot in partnership, is we just say something like, 'You seem....' and then we fill in the blank. 'You seem shutdown,' 'You seem like you don't want to talk to me,' 'You seem angry,' and all of that is projection. We are just taking a guess at with our sensitivity, with what's going on over there and often times we are right on because we not only track our partner in our co-dependant style --- if we live with them we track them much more than we even realise and this is sort of the co-dependant stance we've developed in childhood to track our parents. Track their emotional stability so that we can get connection. We could dodge and weave to get the least amount harm and the most amount of goodies, whether that was actually goodies like cookies or thank you's or the goodies of having Mum or Dad hug us or pay attention to us.

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Know this, that you're constantly projecting onto your partner and it's okay and it's normal and there is nothing wrong with it and it's not bad. It's just going on all of the time. If you go out in the world you're projecting all into the world also. You've probably hear this saying, 'if you spot it, you got it', I like that saying because it implies that what I see out there is going on in here. As a general rule of thumb, I take it that everything outside of me that is beautiful and ugly or hurtful or painful, everything out there that I see is also in here. So, when we take this view we don't have to get into some argument about, 'Well, I'm not really projecting because that's not a trait I have.' The classic example is, you see someone who is incredibly obese and you say, 'Well that person is obese' and someone could say, 'Well, you're just projecting,' and let's say I'm really skinny or anorexic or whatever and I don't have the issue of obesity going on. So, true that I'm not quote 'obese' however, I have the characteristics and traits that manifest obesity. For example, not taking care of myself, hurting myself, not exercising,

not attending to my physiology, not being in touch with my body and what I put in my body. You know, there is a number of ways that I can relate to someone who is quote 'obese' because I have everything the obese person has except obesity. My symptoms manifest a lot differently than someone who is obese.

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Coming back to just a relationship, an intimate partner that you say, 'You seem angry,' right. That usually doesn't go well, you've probably tried it and when we feel tracked we start to feel judged and criticised by our partner. I recommend that when your partner says, 'You seem...' fill in the blank, you say, 'Time out, can you please make a statement about yourself right now,' or, 'if you have a question on how I'm doing right now?' Because we have a lot more space, human beings like space when someone just says, 'How are you?' We have a choice and space. We can lie and say we're fine, we can say hold on let me check in with myself and do a little mini rapid fire 'NEST' meditation and say, 'Oh, I'm actually like a seven and I'm pretty irritable right now and I feel a lot of tension in my chest,' and then our partner goes, cool, thanks for saying and telling me what's going on. Then they might want to know more, 'Well, did I do something wrong?' 'Did something happen at work?' etc. Do you see the difference with that and if I say to you, 'You seem angry.' 'You see mad' 'You seem shutdown.' Right? We just generally speaking don't respond very well to that. So, you're going to want to start training your partner by setting a boundary and saying, 'You know what, I really don't like it when you say, 'You seem...' and then you fill in the blank, 'I would prefer it a whole lot more if you could just ask me how I'm doing or make a statement about yourself.'

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It took me many years to get this with my Wife because I am such a tracker and her favourite response which finally got me back in my space was, 'Will you please make a statement about yourself?' That's the only thing she would say. So, she wouldn't even agree or disagree with me, she would just say, 'Will you please make a statement about yourself?' Because my Wife likes a lot of room, she likes space, she likes an opportunity to decide and choose and most of us are like that.

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Pause.

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The classic example of a projector helps with understanding projection. So, a projector for a movie is, it runs on a little screen, it runs the tape and then it gets projected by a mirror or some device onto a wall or a screen, right? That's why it's called a projector. So, we are all projectors, we are projecting our internal life onto a screen which is life, externally and other people. Which is why some of us are so good at projecting and we're so accurate, it is because we know what it feels like to feel what they're feeling. We know what it feels like or we respond in a certain way that when someone behaves that way out there, we respond this way and that's usually the template we grew up with. We're hyper-sensitive to anything that looks like our family of origin and we will just project outward and react usually. And, there is another layer to projection which is when we perceive someone is challenging our operating system, we will go into a defensive posture of some kind usually and when we perceive someone is supporting our operating system (our values and the things we care about in life) we tend to open up and relax and soften.

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It's important to distinguish, 'Are you projecting someone's threatening your way of being or are they in support of your way of being?' which is why we tend to choose friends and a community that supports our way of being, rather than challenges it. And, we tend to not hang out with people much that challenge our way of being, although if we want to grow of course, we want to surround ourselves with a variety of people that both challenge us and support us in how we live our life, because it helps us grow. So, when your relationship gets challenging because they're challenging your way of being, welcome it.

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Pause.

10:23

Okay, how do we deal with projections? One of my favourite ways is simply to name it as such. 'Honey, I'm projecting that you're mad at me,' goes a whole lot better than, 'You seem mad at me?' or 'You seem shut down.' Another two example here --- I used to get really irritated when people would tell me, 'Hey, are you happy?' because that's one that I grew up with. Implicit in that question is a preference and that's what I grew up with around my Mom, she would ask that question a lot, 'Are you happy?' And, so I felt boxed in. Well, there's one way to respond here, which is yes, right? Because what happens if I say no? Then she gets upset. So, of course I attracted people into my life that would ask me that question well after I moved out of my house, 'Are you happy?' I remember being at the climbing gym one time and my climbing partner asked me that, 'Hey, are you happy?' and I just wanted to punch him in the face because I felt so projected upon and boxed in. I like space also. So, I way appreciate and prefer when people just say, 'How are you?' this is why that's such a great question, 'How are you doing?' 'What's happening inside?' 'What's going on in there?'

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Pause.

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So, when we say, 'I project that you're mad at me or I'm projecting happiness on to you,' we take responsibility that we might be wrong and we're just sensing something and perceiving something and then we let people correct us. They can say, 'No, actually it's not quite anger it's more like irritability and I'm feeling really annoyed about something and I can feel my jaw clenching,' and they just tell us. Another favourite way to project onto to someone in a way that's going to go a little better in your relationships is to say, 'Hey, I'm kind of making up a story about you right now, because I haven't heard from you,' and when I don't hear from people either via email, via an invite I sent them and I never hear back or they don't return my phone call or whatever, what do you image I do? I do what

you do, I project into the silence and the space and I typically in my past especially have made it about me. Well, it must be because I upset them or it must be because I did something wrong or I start analysing all the past interactions I had with that person and go, 'Oh, yeah it definitely must of been that message that I sent them or that text,' or 'Oh, right, it's because I didn't pay for the bill last time we went out, he paid for the bill and now he's kind of resenting me.' And then when I actually get with the person, I found out that that's not going on for them at all. I find out that was just my little story line and fantasy going on and that's why I do when there's a lot of silence because I grew up with the silent treatment so it's easy for me to read into silence and make it about me. My Mom is silent because she is mad at me. My Dad is silent because he is mad my Mom. Because no one is talking! No one is talking about it.

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So, quiet people get projected upon a lot and people that shut down and are more islands and introverted and go kind of cold and quiet and distant and withdraw in their relationship, get lots of projections versus the person who is more of a wave and more connecting, they at least can talk about their experience a little more openly. So, good to know about yourself if you're more of a 'withdrawer, shuter downer' you're inviting projection because you won't communicate what's going on with your partner in you. If you get annoyed with people that are projecting upon you, especially your intimate partner it's probably because you're not communicating very much. The more you just own your feelings and talk directly with people, the less they have to project onto you what's going on.

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Okay, one final point here that feels really important is the difference between judgement and projection. So, in some settings judgement and projection is basically the same thing. Let's say I'm judging you because you're not doing the work and so I judge you. That can be me just projecting the part of me that doesn't do the work maybe in a different area in my life and I'm just projecting self-hatred there or I'm just not liking that part of myself when I see you doing that and then I get upset and judge you, because really I stand in judgement with me.

Anytime we judge other people there is a projection going on typically. So it's good to get below your judgements and find out the projection and see if you can own the trait inside of you. I teach this in my classes.

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Pause.

16:00

Judgement is more like discernment in that we're judging all of the time, we're judging other people but we're also making judgements about our day and our life and so when we make that kind of judgement it's more of a discernment. I'm using decision making and I'm taking action, that's all judgement, right? Judgement around my schedule is important because that helps me take good care of myself. I hope that makes sense. We could say that there is two kinds of judgement; the judgement around just discernment, discerning your day, discerning activities, discerning work decisions, discerning all kinds of things, filtering through the information coming to you throughout the day, you need to judge. Am I going to pay attention to this? Am I not going to pay attention to that? That's great stuff, discernment. Then the other kind of judgement is judging people which is typically projection.

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Pause and cut out a small section (shifting through notes).

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A final point here, some spiritual teachers and communities and teachings will actually teach you that you can essentially not judge people, which I think is just a load of crap and it sets you up for a lot of frustration and failure to pretend as though you can get to a place where you don't judge people. I will see, you know, I'm near the half point of my life probably and I'll see by the end of my life I'll really know from my own experience whether that's true or not but I don't have a fantasy that I'm going to get beyond judgement and I'm just going to feel

compassion for everybody because I can't feel compassion for people I'm judging and that's important to be able to bump up against that because then it points me to the place in me that I'm not appreciating or loving inside of myself. So, whatever camp, whatever group of people, it doesn't matter if its surface level or a deep level, whatever you're judging out there is going on in you and you're work is to learn how to embrace that part of you, so that you can embrace them. The most conscious people, the most developed people in the world have a big range of accepting lots of different people because they accept different parts of themselves and they've done a lot of work over the years to embrace internally all of the war that's going on out there, they've embraced and reconciled the war inside. Those are extraordinary people to be around because they have a huge capacity to accept, just about anybody, genuinely.

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