

Noesis Insights

Interpolated Instability: The Collapse of Coherence

Anthoni L McElrath

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The United States is suffering a cognitive breakdown. Not a sudden rupture, but a slow, distributed collapse of its symbolic and operational intelligence. What once passed for cultural direction—a balance between naming (verbal intelligence) and doing (performance intelligence)—has degraded into reactive signaling and hollow motion. The signs are everywhere: strategic incoherence at the state level, performative polarization in discourse, a flattened moral lexicon, and a public that increasingly lacks the tools to organize either self or society.

We are experiencing what can only be called a cognitive imbalance, a fragmentation of verbal and performance capacities across institutions, communities, and selves. The left and right both misfire in different registers: one drowning in semantic inflation, the other in instrumental denial. On both sides, language fails to correspond to lived structure. We lack not only the language to articulate identity, values, and coherence—but the procedural knowledge of how to perform them under pressure. This isn't just political decay. It's neurocultural entropy.

The founding contradiction of the U.S.—a democratic ideal scaffolded on dispossession and enslavement—has always carried a degree of cognitive dissonance. But that dissonance once generated productive tension. It animated change, rhetoric, even moral urgency. Today, that contradiction has collapsed under the weight of racial volatility and moral exhaustion. The unifying narrative no longer holds. You can see this in how the state responds to its own crises. Environmental collapse (California wildfires, Gulf hurricanes, water contamination in Flint and Jackson), racial uprisings (George Floyd, Ferguson, Standing Rock), institutional failure (January 6th, mass shootings, COVID disinformation): each one reveals the same thing—a system incapable of reading its own internal signals and responding with adaptive intelligence. The collapse isn't just ideological. It's infrastructural. Climate infrastructure remains underfunded. Public health systems remain politically neutered. The judiciary increasingly functions as a tool of regression. Our systems perform either as theater or surveillance. The organs of state no longer serve the body; they serve their own inertia.

We are beyond consumerism as an identity engine. Its motivational structure—acquire, display, signal power—no longer maps to meaningful gain. Late capitalism has not vanished, but it has hollowed out. The result is a reversal of tempo: we move slower, less strategically, and with diminished reward. You see it in climate response: the data is known, the thresholds are clear, the technologies exist—and still, decision-makers delay. This isn't just corruption or cowardice; it's cognitive disorganization on a civilizational scale. We've entered a state of slow reactivity, where performance is delayed until symbolic equilibrium is restored—except it never is. Psychologists like Robert Sapolsky have long argued that chronic stress erodes decision-making capacity (*Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*). Under conditions of perpetual emergency, the prefrontal cortex—responsible for planning, impulse control, and abstract thought—loses influence to the amygdala. We don't govern. We flinch.

What we call leadership is often a pantomime of restoration. Elected officials gesture toward “healing” or “unity” without understanding the systems they invoke. They call for return without

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recognizing that the baseline itself is toxic or gone. There is no original form to return to. Restoration, absent re-foundation, is a hallucination. In this climate, altruism collapses into futility. Soup kitchens, volunteer efforts, even community building can feel directionless—not because they lack virtue, but because they no longer register within the broader symbolic economy. Meaning doesn't scale when the system has no place for it.

The problem isn't individual effort. It's structural incoherence: acts of care and contribution exist in a vacuum, unsupported by policy, culture, or long-form symbolic reinforcement. We are asked to survive individually and then shamed for doing so. Social contribution becomes morally coded, but materially useless. This creates a new psychological bind: survive, but do not be seen surviving. Endure, but quietly. Help but expect no systemic reinforcement. Purpose is not just lacking—it is mocked, commodified, or dismissed as naïve.

In the language of Daniel Kahneman, we've moved from *System 2 thinking* (deliberate, logical, intentional) to *System 1 panic*—fast, reactive, emotion-driven cognition. As society becomes less predictable, the internal algorithms that govern selfhood revert to short-term calculations. In the face of this incoherence, many retreat internally. Spiritual traditions are diluted, ideological maps fail, and belief systems are either persecuted or evacuated of coherence. The only secure territory left is the interior—the psychological zone where one can hold structure without immediate threat.

This isn't retreat in the romantic sense. It's psychic lockdown. We become parents to our own inner child, whispering with tearful resolve: *Stay inside. Stay quiet. It's not safe to come out yet.* But we don't know when it will be safe. The outside world no longer offers signals of reentry. Every structure—political, ecological, social—feels brittle, surveilled, distorted. This internalization becomes chronic. The self-folds inward, not out of spiritual depth, but to preserve whatever structural integrity remains. Environmental psychologists like Roger Ulrich and Stephen Kaplan have shown that environments saturated in threat signals—noise, chaos, surveillance, toxicity—cause consistent degradation in cognition and emotional regulation. Safety isn't a mood. It's a neurocognitive precondition for intelligent response.

This is what I call interpolated instability—a state of psychological existence defined by overexposure to incoherent input and underdevelopment of stabilizing form. We become mentally disjointed not just because we are stressed or anxious, but because our cultural, political, and physical environments no longer support integration. In clinical terms, this mirrors a form of pathological self-erasure. It is not visible collapse, but systemic soft deletion of selfhood: unable to name oneself, unable to act with sustained direction, unable to believe the signals of one's own nervous system. Gabor Maté calls this “the loss of authenticity in service of attachment.” What begins as adaptation becomes internal disappearance. We conform to survive, then forget the form we once conformed from. It's not madness. It's structure-dependent dysfunction. A collapse in the feedback loop between the world, the system, and the self.

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This site is not about healing in the traditional sense. It is about restoring structural coherence under volatile conditions. You don't need peace. You need form. You need systems of selfregulation that function under collapse. What follows here is a manual for building that structure—not once, but recursively, across pressure, panic, and time. As Greene might advise when the enemy is disorganized, do not match his rhythm. When the world fractures, double down on structure. When the center cannot hold—build one. Let's begin by tracing instability—not just as a feeling, but as a system. First through the state. Then through society. Then through you. Then: inside you. Where the last form must hold. Or be rebuilt. This site was built in response to a specific failure: not just the breakdown of systems, but the masking of that breakdown by competent-seeming performance. We see success without structure, adaptation without alignment, motion without meaning. The culture, like many of its people, is drifting—functioning just enough to delay collapse, but with no coherent center.

The core premise is simple: mental performance isn't a matter of mood, emotion, or optimization. It's about structural coherence—the ability to maintain form under conditions of volatility, threat, or collapse.

We live in an era of ambient collapse:

- Climate degradation forces involuntary migration, ecological trauma, and sensory overload.
- Economic incoherence produces overwork, under compensation, and symbolic deprivation.
- Institutional decay (politics, religion, education) removes external scaffolding for moral and cognitive coherence.
- Technological acceleration outpaces evolutionary calibration of the nervous system.

The nervous system evolved to adapt to acute threat followed by recovery. It did not evolve to absorb the perpetual volatility of modern life: constant surveillance, shifting identities, eroded rituals, and weaponized distraction.

In this context, the mind doesn't just break from trauma—it dissolves from incoherence. This site builds tools to prevent that dissolution.