

# sExpat

By Deidre Dare

## *Sleeping in the Cuckoo's Nest*

Einstein said that the definition of



insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. By his definition, I've been over the cuckoo's nest for years now.

I've run to the same people for as long as I can remember - seeking the same things that they, as usual, can't (or won't) give me.

In fact, it's Einstein's fault I ended up in Moscow in the first place: I wanted a different "result," so I decided to try something "different."

I mean, if you can't trust the most important physicist that ever lived, who can you trust?

But when I discovered that one has to frequently leave Moscow on visa runs and that therefore one can still fly to whomever one so pleases (including those who can't (or won't) give you what you need), I also discovered the fatal flaw in my Einstein-inspired plan.

But I'm not one to give up on the rationality of physics, so I keep trying to do things differently.

Which is how I recently found myself being woken up at dawn, hung over and having crashed on my Aunt's couch a few hours earlier, by a precocious ten year old asking me what, exactly, jaundice is and why was I afraid of it?

"I can't answer any questions that border on the existential this early in the morning without coffee, codeine and a cigarette," I mumbled, turning away. "Make me some coffee and I'll handle the other drugs."

"I'm only ten," my little cousin complained. "I don't know HOW to make coffee. And you're not supposed to do drugs or smoke for that matter!"

In an exquisitely Auntie Mame moment, all I said was: "Why don't you be a good boy and figure out how to make coffee? And, while you're at it, leave me alone about my little drug indulgences? I'm in my forties: I can do what I want."

It appeared that the child had overheard, unbeknownst to us grownups, my tale of woe the night before and had become intrigued.

The tale of woe was a simple one: In another effort to do something "differently," I'd run this time to a new man whom I loved who said he could (and would) give me what I needed, wanted, desired or craved. In fact: he'd give me anything at all.

But he freaked out one night and left me somewhere, compelling me to take a taxi to my family's house. I was

in the cab, sobbing dreadfully, when the driver, in all solicitude, asked me if I was alright.

"Why?" I screeched in a panic, lunging myself into the front seat and looking at myself in the rear-view mirror. "Am I yellow!?"

(When heartbroken, disappointed and forlorn, I tend to drink too much and then transfer all my free-flowing anxiety into a fear of cirrhosis. Or underwater tunnels. Which one of these phobias will master the moment depends on both the day and my mood.)

Coffee duly served, I explained the history of my situation to the child.

"So let me see if I've got this right," he mused as I smoked a fourth cigarette on my Aunt's stoop. "You used to go out with sociopaths and, as I see it, you've moved onto psychopaths. Would that pretty much sum it up?"

I took a long drag of my fag and exhaled luxuriously as I pondered.

"Yep. That would pretty much sum it up, Kid," I finally agreed. "Pretty much."

It turns out that if you keep doing things differently over and over again and expecting a different result, you can also be insane.

Which brings us into the mind-blowing realm of quantum physics. Can doing something different be the equivalent of doing something the same?

"Deidre Dare," my little cousin said to me as he went into the house for breakfast, "you're a complicated woman and I like it."

"Well," I exulted, as the screen door banged behind him and I popped another pill, "it's all worth it for a compliment like that!"

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