

EGO: MECHANISM, TRICKS, DISGUISES, IDENTIFICATIONS

Unless we know the basic mechanics behind the workings of the ego, we won't recognize it and it will trick you into identifying with it again and again. This means it takes over you, it is an impostor pretending to be you.

The egoic mind consists of *content* and *structure*. *What* you identify with is the content and this changes from person to person and periods of our life. The unconscious compulsion to identify with something is structural

Ego is essentially (but not only) identification with forms, primarily thought forms but also physical forms and emotional forms.

The most basic level of identification is with material things (a toy, a car house, clothes). I try to find myself in things but end up losing myself in them, The ego satisfaction is short-lived and so you keep looking for more.

Wanting keeps the ego alive much more than *having*. *Wanting* is structural and not amount of content (*having*) can provide lasting fulfilment. However 'I', 'me', 'my' and 'mine' belongs to the structure of the ego.

Unease, restlessness, boredom, anxiety, dissatisfaction, are the result of unfulfilled wanting. Wanting is structural, so no amount of content can provide lasting fulfilment as long as that mental structure remains in place.

Another form of identification is body. But more fundamental than things and bodies is thought forms. They are energy formations, less dense than physical matter but form nonetheless.

Most people have an incessant stream of thoughts, a compulsive thinking. When every thought absorbs your attention completely, when you're indentified with the 'voice in your head' and the emotions that accompany them, then you are totally identified with Form and in the grip of ego.

The greater part of most people's thinking is involuntary, automatic, and repetitive. It is no more than a kind of mental static and fulfils no real purpose. Strictly speaking, you don't think: **Thinking happens to you.**

Ego consists of:

-thought and emotion,

-a bundle of memories you identify as 'me and my story',

-habitual roles you play knowingly or not,

-collective identifications such as nationality, race social class or position, profession etc.

-personal identifications, not only with possessions, but with opinions, external appearance, long-standing resentments, concepts of yourself as better or worse than others, of success or failure. The content changes but the same structure operates in every ego.

The underlying emotion that governs all the activity of the ego is fear. Why fear? Because the ego arises by identification with form, and deep down it knows that no forms are permanent, that they are all fleeting. So there is always a sense of insecurity around the ego even if on the outside it appears confident.

ROLE PLAYING

Usually people are completely unaware of the roles they play. Some are subtle; others are obvious, except to the person playing it. Some roles are designed simply to get attention from others. The ego thrives on others' attention, which is after all a form of psychic energy.

A shy person who is afraid of the attention of others is not free of ego, but has an ambivalent ego that both wants and fears attention from others. The fear is that the attention may take the form of disapproval or criticism.

A very common role is the one of victim, once I am identified with a story in which I assigned myself the role of victim, The ego does not want an end to its “problems” because they are part of its identity.

EGO ‘DELAYS’ HAPPINESS

Being at peace and being who you are, that is, being yourself, are one. The ego says: Maybe at some point in the future, I can be at peace—if this, that, or the other happens, or I obtain this or become that. Or it says: I can never be at peace because of something that happened in the past. The ego doesn’t know that your only opportunity for being at peace is now. Or maybe it does know, and it is afraid that you may find this out. Peace, after all, is the end of the ego.

How to be at peace now? By making peace with the present moment

An illness can either strengthen or weaken the ego. If you complain, feel self-pity, or resent being ill, the ego becomes stronger. It also becomes stronger if you make the illness part of your conceptual identity.

Those people who experience a strengthening of the ego in illness take much longer to recover. Some never do, and so the illness becomes chronic and a permanent part of their false sense of self.

BEYOND EGO: YOUR TRUE IDENTITY

All that is required to become free of the ego is to be aware of it, since awareness and ego are incompatible. Awareness is the power that is hidden within the present moment.

The ultimate purpose of Spiritual realization is to see clearly that what I perceive, experience, think, or feel is ultimately not who I am, that I cannot find myself in all those things that continuously pass away.

The act of recognition is one of the ways in which awakening happens. When you recognize the unconsciousness in you, that which makes the recognition possible IS the arising of consciousness. You cannot fight against the ego and win. The light of consciousness is all that is necessary. You are that light

The history of revolutions illustrates what happens when people attempt to change external reality without any prior change in their inner reality, their state of consciousness. People want the change the world without taking into consideration the dysfunction that each human being carries within: the ego

Non-reaction to the ego in others is one of the most effective ways not only of going beyond ego in yourself but of dissolving other people's ego.