

Article 19: Ego, ...Friend or Foe?

The ego we know today as the personality component that is conscious, most immediately controls behavior, and is most in touch with external reality, ...and which is also known as self-love ...and as the source of one's external individuality seems to have originated with Freud, ...or more particularly with Anna Freud's ego psychology, which emphasized the therapeutic value of restoring the ego instead of submerging or replacing it with instinctual drives. But ego is an ancient concept, with many different names, which was developed in an environment that was steeped in beliefs of the dual nature of all things, such as *good/evil, reality/illusion, or truth/untruth*, which states that in order for you to experience *good or reality or truth*, you must get rid of a struggle against *evil or illusion or untruth*.

In addition, the belief in the nonexistence (read nonphysical) of self--the void--being the deepest nature or essence of self and reality, comes from Buddhism. Buddha held that all true things are "not self". Buddhism teaches that there are two selves: the *false personality*, which today we call ego, and the *true self or essence*.

The old belief was that your ego must be destroyed before there can be any real recognition, experiencing, or direct expressing of your essential beingness. And though, now, this belief has grown somewhat to embrace the idea that your essential beingness can be enlivened to assist in the destruction of your ego identification and life, you can easily see in this the endless struggle between good/evil, beingness/ego, spirit/physical/, truth/untruth which only maintains ancient beliefs and conflicts, and which maintains the concept that if you struggle hard enough and sincerely or faithfully enough and endure long enough, then the rewards or greater life of goodness and beingness will be offered to you by spirit. Forever Living reveals that absent your false judgments of good/evil in any form, that goodness, beingness, spirit is directly recognized, experienced, and expressed today.

Ego is also indicated to be *identification with past experience*. The assumption seems to be that to fully experience one's true self or essence or spirit, to become a "realized individual", you must cut through or eliminate your ego, which presumably veils truth. The presumption is that any form or self identification conceals truth, ...but this is not so.

For example, if we introduce a knowing about or discussion of "circularity", a truth that is the "essence of circles", we can ONLY know or discuss *particular circles or things that are round*, which are individual forms or expressions of circularity, ...we cannot discuss the essence of circularity. Form and essence are one and simultaneous, ...essence does

not precede form, but we can say that form gives life to essence, just as circles give life to circularity, or all that is physical gives life to all that is spiritual, ...and, in that, the two are one.

The Buddhist concept of seeking the void--the truth and essence of life--as a state of beingness, requires ego death, or death of the self, ...but Forever Living reveals that since all things are good, there is nothing to cut through or eliminate, no selfness or self-awareness to put aside or destroy, ...one can live the profound truth and reality of life without interference by fully focusing upon the truth (intangible) or reality (tangible) of life.

This is living, not experiencing, for experiencing requires self-awareness in order to be aware of one's experiencing, ...which, by the way, whether tangible or intangible, is resistance, for you do not and cannot experience another person or thing, or even a void, you only experience your resistance to that thing or void. Any Buddhist's attempt to "experience" the void, essence, truth, reality, spirit, personal beingness, or the beingness of life requires self-awareness--also known as ego.

Meditators frequently expound upon the great beingness experienced in prolonged mediation which they cannot describe; ..."You have to experience it without ego," they declare. Do you see the conflict in this? If they "experienced", their self-awareness, ego was present and experiencing, and after the fact, they are merely denying that which experienced. Destroying your ego in order to profoundly experience is a process of denial, while fully and enrichingly *being* your essence or trueself *by completely focusing on another, or the tangible or intangible*, ends your futile struggle against ego. By properly focusing, your ego and experiencing are maintained, ...though, with your attention on the other, you cannot detail *what* is experience, but since you maintain the receptor of experiencing--your ego--you gain all the benefits of that experience, ...and because of *your ego's identification with past experience*, you are able to express and continue living the beingness, reality, essence, spirit, and profound truth of yourself and all things at all times.

Of course, these experiences are known and expressed *as you are*, not as those experiences are, *for experiencing is experiencing your resistance*, ...also, you cannot experience the void or essence of yourself or reality, for, if the essence of all things is a void, as it is, no experiencing is possible, ...nor can you express *absent self*. All things in life emergently arise from nothing, *ex nihilo*, ...therefore, experiencing begins at the first

form or appearance, ...just as circularity began with the first circle ...and will end (if that is possible) with the last circle.

Ego is vital and essential!

For those of you who believe in the duality of all things, ego offers you a "bad aspect of yourself" to endlessly blame and futilely struggle against, and use to excuse your actions, ...which keeps you eternally confused and disappointed ...and unable to live the self and life of your dreams. This endless, unresolvable conundrum and struggle against ego was best expressed by a member of a seminar who asked, "My spiritual teacher, who obviously has an ego, declares that all ego-individuals live in and speak only untruths, ...is he telling me the truth or lying?"

But those of you who realize the goodness and benevolence of all things, will find ego to be a faithful, honest, and trustworthy companion and advisor to protect and nurture and strengthen.