

A Talk on Ego

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*Editor's note: This file is a bit more tangled than usual – which is saying something! There are two versions of the brief essay “A Talk on the Ego” in the original document – a more recent, neatly typed version, probably from the 1970s, and an earlier, very heavily edited version from the late 1950s. (The stationary used in the second, earlier version is from the California address of Jacques Masson; we know that PB briefly stayed at the Masson residence in the mid 1950s and probably again in 1957 on his way to or from Hawaii.) Since the footnotes marking the specific edits made and remade by PB would take up the better part of each page, we have opted to leave them out altogether; in their place we have included two different versions of the edited, earlier essay. The first includes all the brackets which indicate that something was added, deleted, or moved; the second is a version of this essay **prior** to any editing by PB whatsoever. Pages 15, 19, and 23 are additions to the text meant for insertion on a specific page, so we have placed them where PB indicated they were to go and marked them with brackets in the middle version. There is not a perfect match between any of the three versions due to PB's choice of paragraph breaks and moved text, however, we feel that for the casual reader these three versions provide the best access to these phases of this developing essay. For the sake of our database the second version of the edited version is marked (11-2) although it is really a different version of (11-1). For more information, we strongly suggest looking at the pdf of the original scan – one glance will suffice to explain our choices!*

*For more information about the people and texts PB quotes or references here, please see the file titled “Wiki Standard Info for Comments.” For more information about the editorial standards, spelling changes, and formatting that we have implemented – including page and para numbering – please see the file titled “Introductory Readers' Guide.” We have introduced minimal changes to the text; our changes deal with inconsistencies of spelling, educated guesses at illegible words, and the rare modification of grammar for clarity's sake. Whenever there is any question as to whether what is typed is what PB wrote, please consult the associated scan of the original pages, currently to be found in a PDF of the same name.
– Timothy Smith (TJS), 2020*

A Talk on Ego

1
A TALK ON EGO
Final Typed Version

(1-1) What is the ego? It is everything we are personally aware of as being ourself – physically, intellectually, and emotionally. It acts through our senses, feelings and

thoughts. Every living human creature knows itself in this personal way and cannot help doing so. There is nothing evil in it.

But still it is not the true man himself. If we are aware of that alone, we are aware of not more than a part of ourself. Why? Because behind the ego is the Universal Mind and Life from which we draw the very capacity of being individually conscious of thoughts feelings and the outside world. We are actually always in contact with this Mind, the point of contact being called the Overself. Nor could we be conscious of anything without this connection, whose effects show themselves rhythmically.

All through Nature there is a process of two-fold rhythm. In the body the blood is circulated by the heart. It goes out, comes back to its centre, and is then pumped out again. The heartbeat is the sign of life. At night our individual ego withdraws into, and is swallowed by, the Universal Mind. It is then unconscious in deep sleep, for when there is no consciousness there is no movement. When the ego awakes, its activity starts. Consider the whole universe and we see that it exists between the same two-way rhythm of stillness and movement. The two together make up the completeness of all existence.

Everything from atom to universe comes originally out of the stillness and must return to it. Everything we are now conscious of we will no longer be conscious of when alone in the still centre of our being with God.

The ego is part of this two way existence. It is not aware of the other part, the Overself, which is like God because it never changes. By contrast the ego, with its body, emotions and intellect, is always changing. It is not eternal. It exists, but is not real in the metaphysical sense. But behind it is the Overself, which is real, without it there could be no ego and from which the ego came out. This is the Divine Centre in us.

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(continued from the previous page) To understand the point better we may look at the cinema. Its pictures are constantly changing and the figures in them often moving, but the screen itself never changes. The Overself is as immobile as the screen. Just as the screen is needed to make the pictures possible, so the Overself makes the ego possible by letting it draw life and intelligence. And just as the screen is unpolluted by all the villainous crimes done in the photographs flickering upon it, unaffected by all the stormy emotions exhibited in the men and women who appear upon it, so the Overself is unpolluted by the ego's sins, unaffected by its thoughts and feelings. If we analyse the ego intellectually, we find that its first constituent is

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the body. All we know of the body is only our [mental]² impression of it. We know it only in our consciousness. The key to understanding this point is to suppose we are dreaming. In that state we could move and talk and work, yet we would be doing it all in a body which we knew only mentally. But to our dreaming self it would seem to be experienced physically! In the same way the waking self experiences the world through the body as if it were outside oneself but it is really a state of consciousness.

The idea associated with the body is always "I." We get this same idea with the thoughts and feelings also. Ordinarily it is the only "I" we know because it is the only "I" our experience has told us about. Where does this "I"-sense come from? It comes from the part of us which is deeper than the ordinary self, the part through which the ego does not act, the part which speaks to us through intuition. That is the Overself, which is impersonal.

The intellectual, the moral and the artistic lift man above the animal nature and make a human being. But they do not make the full human being. The Highest part is beyond them because it is the part from which even they draw their vitality. We have to become whole and complete as a human being to fulfil the purpose of evolution. This requires us to become aware of this unknown part. It is the still centre which makes all activities possible, the Overself behind the ego.

To an infant the painting of Mona Lisa is only a blur of colour but to a grown-up man, with mature refined feeling, it is a thing of moving appeal. Why? Because when we hear inspired music or see a beautiful painting and enjoy it very deeply we are

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(continued from the previous page) really experiencing a momentary reminder of this Presence of the Overself's beauty within ourselves.

How can we overcome the ego? We should watch ourselves [a hundred times]⁴ during the day and detach ourselves from whatever we may be doing or saying or feeling. Through long practice this will develop an amazing inner calmness. We should try not to allow anything to disturb us. Even if others behave badly towards us we should understand their bad actions as something they cannot help. They themselves are the result of all their past. They will go on from a lower stage of evolution to a higher one in time. We should try to see that such sins or errors are inevitable just where they have reached. If we should practise non-injury

² "mental" was typed above the line and inserted with a caret.

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⁴ "a hundred times" was typed above the line and inserted with a caret.

toward them and refrain from returning evil for the evil they do us we shall not only avoid expressing the ego, but what is more actually gain a victory over it!

We can now appreciate why in India, at the confirmation ceremony a Brahmin boy is initiated at the age of thirteen, the family guru obeys tradition and tells him that no matter what happens he must always try to practice calmness, that this is the greatest virtue he can possess mentally, just as purity is the greatest physically. Of course this is taught only to boys of the highest caste, the Brahmins, from whom the priests are drawn. If we too practise this virtue, we shall not only become serene and detached, but we shall also begin to understand what the ego is. We shall learn that the ego is constantly changing. It is not a permanent being. So where is the thing we call ego? Can we not say it is unreal?? It is only a series of emotional and mental changes which we think is "I" only because beneath them all is the feeling that we exist. This does not change for even if we can succeed in freeing ourself from them temporarily in meditation and hence from the ego, we still feel this "I" as a state where only the "Eternal Now" flows continuously from one moment to another.

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(continued from the previous page) There is no ego in the final reality, only in the immediate practical existence of this illusory world. We should not be deceived by what it seems to be. We must practice the exercise of constantly reflecting upon its true nature, until we understand it is only a mental idea, something we take for granted by habit but which is only an appearance.

Another way to loosen the ego's grip upon us is to think of it as if it were a figure in a dream. Holding this thought repeatedly will help our efforts greatly. A third way is to regard what is happening to us as if it were happening to a stranger. For example, we will then try to become detached from praise given just as much as from abuse thrown at us. Thus, by such disciplines and [reflections]⁶ we dig down to the source where the ego comes from. All these practices are necessary; meditation alone is not enough. When you can stand aside from the ego and keep it in its proper place, it will then be working in a balanced rhythm with the Overself, of which it will be the fully obedient servant.

As human beings go through their reincarnations they will be compelled, when their experience of life is long enough, to seek the real self in the end. First their mental development is forced by need for money, later by ambition for power or position, then for culture, and lastly they ruefully realise that even though they

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⁶ PB himself changed "reflection" to "reflections" by hand.

have all these things, they still lack Peace; they are still not inwardly satisfied. So they are forced to look within themselves and then they have to begin to transcend the ego.

The first beginning in this direction is through religion, which leads them by their faith to discipline their animal feelings and lower nature to some extent. To arouse, urge and stimulate men to do this, thus furthering their evolution, God sends prophets to them. The degree of evolution in character, intellect and environment at which they stand, limits what the prophets can teach them. Out of the mass of people some are more evolved and are led into the second and higher degree through mysticism. Here not only do they try to purify [and control]⁷ their bodies, emotions and thoughts but the ego itself is now recognised as an enemy to be fought. Here also the practice of meditation is taken up. It shows them the way into themselves, by drawing them away from the world outside, where

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(continued from the previous page) most of their troubles come from, or from the body. Consequently they feel a satisfying peace as their intuitive feelings are developed and expand into mystical experiences.

The⁹ third stage is the philosophic one. All they previously learned was valued for the benefits it gave them but now they want to find Truth for its own sake and to its fullest extent. For they learn that when the ego is not mastered the moment they return from the Peace of meditation, it rushes in and subtly converts part of the results to its own purpose. They not only want peace but also the answers to many troubling questions about the world in which they live. Above all, they want to be always aware of the Overself whether they are active or at rest, because that is why they are here, and not just fitfully during meditation.

The deeper and fuller discipline of the ego is the last one to be undergone by the aspirant. By competent instruction, by his own constant watchful thought and special meditation, he ferrets it down to its hidden lair, gives it battle, and destroys its illusion thoroughly and finally. It can never again intrude into his feelings or ideas, much less master him. All through his philosophic career on the third stage he works also at the Short Path which sees nothing to alter, improve or change in him because it does not trouble with the ego at all but tries to find the Overself by

⁷ “and control” was typed above the line and inserted with a caret.

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⁹ The following two paragraphs only appear in the “Final Typed Version” of this essay; they are missing from the rough draft—which may or may not have originally had them on a separate page. —TJS, 2020

insight, by seeing and being IT, by direct awareness of the Reality which always is at the foundation of his life.

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(11-1) *{Editor's note: This para is a very heavily edited, handwritten draft of the previous para. To make this readable, we have chosen to make two versions of this para – this one shows the post-edit text, which mostly (but not entirely!) matches the typed version, but also contains brackets which mark where edits have been made. There are so many changes that we have chosen not to include footnotes with the original text here – instead, there is a second version of this para below which shows the first draft before it was edited. To see everything that is happening on one page, we recommend examining the original scan.}*

[What is the ego? It] is everything [we] are personally aware of as [being
ourselves –] physically, intellectually, and emotionally. It acts through [our] senses,
feelings and thoughts. Every living human creature knows itself in this personal
[way and] cannot help doing so. There is nothing evil in it.

But still it is not the true man himself. If [we are] aware of that [alone, we are]
aware of [not more than] a part of [ourselves.] [Why? Because] behind the ego is the
Universal Mind and Life from which [we] draw [the very capacity of being
individually conscious] of thoughts feelings and the outside world. [We are
actually] always in contact with [this Mind], the point of contact being [called] the
Overself. [Nor could we] be conscious of anything without this connection, [whose
effects show themselves] rhythmically.

All through Nature there is [a] process of two-fold rhythm. In the [body] the
blood [is] circulated by the heart. It goes out, comes back [to its centre,] and is then
pumped out again. The heartbeat is the sign of life. At night [our individual ego]
withdraws [into, and is swallowed by, the Universal Mind.] [It is then]
unconsciousness [in] deep sleep, [for when] there is no consciousness there is no
movement. [When] the ego [awakes, its] activity starts. [Consider] the whole
universe [and we see that it] exists between the [same] two-way rhythm of stillness
and [movement.] The two together make up the completeness of [all] existence.

Everything [from atom to universe] comes [originally] out of the stillness and
must return to it. Everything [we] are [now] conscious of [we] will no longer be
conscious of when alone [in the still centre of our being with] God.

The ego [is] part of this two way existence. [It is] not aware of the other part,
the Overself, which is [like God] because it never changes. By contrast the ego, [with
its] body, emotions and intellect, is always changing. It is not eternal. It exists, but is
not real in the metaphysical sense. But behind it is the Overself, which is real;

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without [it] there could be no ego and from which the ego came out. This is the [divine centre in us.]

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(continued from the previous page) [To] understand the point better [we may] look at the cinema. Its pictures are constantly changing [and the figures in them often moving] but the screen itself never changes. The Overself is as immobile as the screen. [Just] as the screen [is needed to make] the pictures possible, so the Overself makes the ego possible [by letting it draw life and intelligence.] [And just as the screen is unpolluted by all the villainous crimes done in the photographs flickering upon it, unaffected by all the stormy emotions exhibited in the men and women who appear upon it, so the Overself is unpolluted by the ego's sins, unaffected by its thoughts and feelings.]¹²

If [we] analyse the ego intellectually, [we] find that its first constituent is the body. All [we] know of the body is only [our mental impression] of it. [We know it only] in [our] consciousness. The key to understanding this [point] is to suppose [we] are dreaming. In that state [we] could move and [talk] and work, yet [we] would be doing [it all] in a body which [we knew only mentally.] [But to our dreaming self] it [would seem] to be experienced physically! [In the same way the waking self experiences the world through] the body [as if it were] outside [ourselves] but it is [really] a state of consciousness.

The idea [associated with] the body is [always] "I." [We] get this [same] idea with [the] thoughts [and feelings also. Ordinarily] it is the only "I" [we] know because it is the only "I" [our] experience has told [us] about. Where does this "I"-sense come from? It [comes from the part of us which] is deeper than the ordinary self, [the part through which] the ego does not act, [the part which speaks to us] through intuition. That [is] the [Overself,] which is impersonal.

The intellectual, the moral and the artistic [lift man above the animal nature and] make [a] human being. But [they do] not [make] the full human being. The [Highest] part is beyond them because it is the part from which even they draw their vitality. [We] have to become whole and complete as a human being to [fulfil the

¹¹ Void page

¹² PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: "And just as the screen is unpolluted by all the [villainous] crimes done in the photographs [flickering] upon it, unaffected by all the stormy emotions exhibited in the men and women who appear upon it, so the Overself is unpolluted by the ego's sins, unaffected by its thoughts and feelings." PB himself inserted "villainous" and "flickering" by hand at a later point.

purpose of evolution. This requires us to] become aware of this [unknown part.] It is the still centre which makes all activities [possible,] the Overself [behind] the ego.

To an infant the painting of Mona Lisa is only a blur of colour but to a grown-up man, with mature refined feeling, it is a thing of moving appeal. Why? Because when [we] hear [inspired] music or see a beautiful painting and enjoy it [very deeply we] are really experiencing a momentary [reminder of this] Presence of the Overself's beauty within [ourselves.]

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{Editor's note: this page is a small paper that has been taped to the side of the previous page. We have inserted the text as intended in the middle of the para, as was marked.}

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(Continued from the previous page) How can [we overcome the ego?] [We should watch ourselves a hundred times] during the day and detach [ourselves] from whatever [we] may be doing or saying or feeling. [Through long practice] this will [develop] an [amazing] inner calmness. [We should try] not [to] allow [anything] to [disturb us. Even if] others behave badly [towards us, we should] understand their bad actions as something they cannot [help. They themselves are the] result of [all their] past. [They will go on from a] lower stage of evolution [to a higher one in time. We should] try to see that [such sins or errors are inevitable] just where they have [reached.] [If we should] practise [non-injury] toward them and refrain from returning evil for the evil they do [us, we shall not only avoid expressing] the ego, but [what is more] actually gain a victory over it!

We can now appreciate why in India, at [the] confirmation ceremony [a Brahmin boy is initiated] at the age of thirteen, the family guru [obeys tradition and] tells him that no matter what happens he must [always] try to practice calmness, that this is the greatest virtue he can possess mentally, just as purity is the greatest physically. [Of course this is taught only to boys of the highest caste, the Brahmins, from whom the priests are drawn.] [If we too practise this virtue, we shall not only

¹³ Void page

¹⁴ Blank page

become serene and detached, but we shall also begin to understand what the ego is. We shall learn that]¹⁵ the [ego] is constantly changing. It is not [a] permanent being. So where is the thing [we] call ego? [Can we not say it is unreal?] It is only a series of [emotional] and mental changes which [we] think is “I” only because beneath them all is the feeling that [we] exist. This does not change for even [if we can] succeed in freeing [ourselves] from them [temporarily in meditation,] and hence from the ego, [we still] feel this “I” [as] a state where only the “Eternal Now” flows continuously from one moment to another.

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(Continued from the previous page) There is no ego in [the final] reality, [only in the immediate practical existence of this illusory world.] [We should] not be deceived by what it seems to be. [We must practice the exercise of] constantly [reflecting] upon its true nature, until [we] understand it is only a mental idea, something [we] take for granted by habit but which is only an appearance.

Another way to loosen the ego's grip upon [us] is to think [of it as if it were a figure in] a dream. Holding this thought [repeatedly] will help [our] efforts [greatly. [A third] [way is to regard what is happening to us as if it were happening to a stranger. For example, we will then try to]¹⁸ become detached from praise given just

¹⁵ PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: “If we too practice this virtue, we shall not only become serene and detached, but we shall also [begin to understand what the ego is. We shall] learn that”. PB himself inserted “begin to understand what the ego is. We shall” by hand at a later point.

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¹⁷ Blank page

¹⁸ PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: “way is to regard what is happening to us as if it were happening to a stranger. For example, we will then try to”.

as much as from abuse [thrown at us.] [Thus,] by [such disciplines and reflections] we dig down [to] the source where the ego comes from. All these practices are [necessary;] meditation alone [is not enough.] When you can stand aside from the ego [and] keep [it] in its proper place, [it] will then be working in a balanced rhythm with the Overself, of which it will be the [fully] obedient servant.

As human beings go through their reincarnations they will be compelled, [when their experience of life is long enough,] to [seek] the real self in the end. First their mental development is forced by [need] for money, [later by ambition for power or position,] then for culture, and lastly they [ruefully] realise that even though they have all these [things,] they [still] lack Peace; [they are still not inwardly satisfied.] So [they are forced to look] within themselves [and thus they] have to begin to transcend the ego.

The first beginning in this direction is through [religion, which] leads them [by their faith] to discipline [their] animal feelings and lower nature to some extent. To [arouse, urge and stimulate men to] do this, [thus furthering] their evolution, God sends prophets to them. [The degree of evolution in character, intellect and environment at which they stand, limits what the prophets can teach them. Out of the mass of people some are more evolved and are led into the second and higher degree through mysticism. Here not only do they try [to] purify [their] bodies, emotions and thoughts [but] the ego itself is [now] recognised as an enemy to be fought. Here also the practice of meditation is taken up. It shows them the way into themselves, by drawing them away from the world outside, where most [of their] troubles come from, or from the body. [Consequently] they feel [a satisfying] peace [as their intuitive feelings are developed and expand into mystical experiences.]¹⁹

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Unedited Draft

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The ego is everything you are personally aware of as yourself physically, intellectually, and emotionally. It acts through your senses, feelings and thoughts.

Every living human creature knows itself in this personal way. It cannot help doing so. There is nothing evil in it. But still it is not the true man himself. If you

¹⁹ This essay continues for two more paragraphs on page 9 of the pdf. See the note there. – TJS, 2020

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are only aware of that you are only aware of a part of yourself. Behind the ego is the universal mind and life from which you draw your individual consciousness of thoughts feelings and the outside world. Actually you are always in contact with it, the point of contact being the Overself. You could not be conscious of anything without this connection, which works rhythmically.

All through Nature there is the same process of two-fold rhythm. In the body you will find that the blood is being circulated by the heart. It goes out, comes back, and is then pumped out again. The heartbeat is the sign of life. At night your ego, the individual self withdraws in its own unconsciousness or deep sleep, swallowed by the universal mind. When there is no consciousness there is no movement. When you awake and return to the ego, activity starts. Between the two-way rhythm of stillness and movement, the whole universe exists. The two together make up the completeness of existence.

Everything comes out of the stillness and must return to it. Everything you are conscious of now you will no longer be conscious of when alone in the stillness of God, who never changes. Where there is no change there is no movement to be conscious of.

The ego is also part of this two way existence. You as the ego are not aware of the other part, the Overself, which is also called the Ultimate because it never changes. By contrast the ego, the body, emotions and intellect is always changing. It is not eternal. It exists but is not real in the metaphysical sense. But behind it is the Overself which is real without which there could be no ego and from which the ego came out. This is the God like part of you.

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(continued from the previous page) You will understand the point better if you look at the cinema. Its pictures are constantly changing but the screen itself never changes. The Overself is as immobile as the screen. Just as the screen makes the pictures possible, so the Overself makes the ego possible.²²

If you analyse the ego intellectually you will find that its first constituent is the body. All you know of the body is only your impression of it. You only know it mentally in your consciousness. The key to understanding this is to suppose you are

²¹ Void page

²² PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: "And just as the screen is unpolluted by all the [villainous] crimes done in the photographs [flickering] upon it, unaffected by all the stormy emotions exhibited in the men and women who appear upon it, so the Overself is unpolluted by the ego's sins, unaffected by its thoughts and feelings." PB himself inserted "villainous" and "flickering" by hand at a later point.

dreaming. In that state you could move and act and work, yet you would be doing all this in a body which you know mentally only, even though to the dream it seems to be experienced physically. Because you are centred in the body it seems outside yourself but actually it is a state of consciousness. The idea behind the body is "I." You get this idea with thoughts, feelings, and body all together, and ordinarily it is the only "I" you know because it is the only "I" your experience has told you about. Where does this "I"-sense come from? It is deeper than the ordinary self. It appears first, in a very different form, in the intuition. Now the ego does not act through intuition. That is where the non-ego starts, in another self which is impersonal. The intellectual, the moral and the artistic make you a human being. But it is not the full human being. The other part is beyond them because it is the part from which even they draw their vitality. You have to become whole and complete as a human being to distinguish yourself from an animal. You must become aware of this deep source. It is the still centre which makes all activities possible. You have to know both the Overself and the ego.

When you hear beautiful inspired music, or see a beautiful painting and enjoy it, you are real experiencing a momentary awakening to the Presence of the Overself's beauty within you. It is in the music because it is in yourself. To an infant the painting of Mona Lisa is only a blur of colour but to a grown-up man, with mature refined feeling, it is a thing of deep moving appeal.

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(Continued from the previous page) How can you do all this? How to put the ego in its proper place you can know only after the foundation formed by the two previous stages, the religious and the mystical has been laid. Begin by trying to understand what the ego is. Watching yourself during the day and detach yourself a

²³ Void page

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hundred times from whatever you may be doing or saying or feeling. This will develop in you an inner calmness. Do not allow it to be disturbed. If others behave badly to you understand their bad actions as something they cannot help, being what they are as a result of their whole past on a lower stage of evolution than yourself, then try to see that that is just where they have reached in the evolutionary plan of the world. If you practise non-violence toward them and refrain from returning evil for the evil they do you, you do not express the ego, but actually gain a victory over it.

You can now appreciate why in India at the equivalent to our confirmation ceremony when they initiate the Brahmin boy at the age of 13, the family guru tells him that no matter what happens he must try to practice calmness, that this is the greatest virtue he can possess mentally just as purity is the greatest physically.²⁵

This detachment from the ego will teach you that it is constantly changing. It is not a real, permanent being. So where is the thing you call ego? It is only a series of emotion and mental changes which you think is "I" only because beneath them all is the feeling that you exist. This does not change for even when you succeed in freeing yourself from them, and hence from the ego, you will feel this "I" still as the Overself, a state where only the "Eternal Now" flows continuously from one moment to another.

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A TALK ON EGO
Unedited Draft

²⁵ PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: "If we too practice this virtue, we shall not only become serene and detached, but we shall also [begin to understand what the ego is. We shall] learn that". PB himself inserted "begin to understand what the ego is. We shall" by hand at a later point.

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(Continued from previous page) There is no ego in reality. Do not be deceived by what it seems to be. Constantly reflecting upon its true nature, until you understand it is only a mental idea, something you take for granted by habit but which is only an appearance.

Another way to loosen the ego's grip upon you is to think of it as a dream.²⁸ Hold this thought repeatedly and it will help your efforts to detach yourself. You must become detached from praise given just as much as from abuse given you. Dig down to find the source where the ego comes from by discipline reflection and meditation. All these practices are necessary, not merely meditation alone.

When you can stand aside from the ego then you see the plan behind the world, that is the World-Idea. After that enlightenment, which is deeper than the ordinary mystic's enlightenment, you will be able to keep the ego in its proper place. The ego will then be working in a balanced rhythm with the Overself, of which it will be the obedient servant.

As human beings go through their reincarnations they will be compelled by a long enough experience to find the real self in the end. First their mental development is forced by ambition for money, then for culture, and lastly they will realise that even though they have all these things, which are subject to change, they lack Peace. So from within themselves they have to begin to transcend the ego.

The first beginning in this direction is through religion. It leads them to discipline animal feelings and lower nature to some extent. To arouse men and make them do this to further their evolution, God sends prophets to stimulate them.

It shows them the way into themselves, by drawing them away from the world outside, where most troubles come from, or from the body. Then they feel peace.

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²⁸ PB himself wrote the following on a separate piece of paper and taped it to the page to be inserted here: "way is to regard what is happening to us as if it were happening to a stranger. For example, we will then try to".

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