

Prison: A Spiritual Journey

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By: Charles Brownell © September 2020

Most often in life, people are so caught up in worldly things, thoughts (opinions), and trying to "live life" (forcefully) that they're oblivious to and cut off from the deeper workings of all things and reasons. They lose connection with themselves as well as the beauty and peace that is the joy and serenity of all life. Lose connection to the "one," the source and all things in it. They become unconscious and unaware and go right into complete identification with thoughts (opinions) and labels of all things. Lost in their Ego (the mind, thoughts), lost to reality and truth. Now, their Egoic mind is the filter through which they view all things... and this "Ego" is self-serving and deceitful.

It would be wonderful to say that this mind and soul was different, but that would be a deception of the Ego which is the master of lies. I too, was lost in the flooded river of thoughts. I was drowning deep in the river of life due to resisting the current trying to force life and to control it. What I needed to do was surrender to life and allow to be as it is allowing it to live through me. I'd forgotten life knows what it's doing. It is I who doesn't. Life knows what's best. Through life, all things are possible and in myself, I can do nothing. I'd forgotten to awaken in consciousness and get out of my thoughts. Step aside to the consciousness that is aware of the flaws and fallacies of the human mind, that is Ego. To feel the joy and inner peace of consciousness, the Being that is one with life. To enjoy all things as they are. I was so closed up in Ego that I lived a fantasy that ultimately found me in prison. Now realize, "fantasy" is another word for mental delusions or illusion of thought. In this state of mind I was interacting with my own thoughts of who and what I thought everyone and everything is, which of course, is NOT what I thought. Herein is the delima, the insecurity of the mind in its natural state. "Maya", the Hindus call it. Dukkha the

Buddha called it, Original sin Jesus called it. Daemon (Deamon/Demon), Devil, and Satan ancient Israelites of the Bible and Ancient Pagans called it. Darkness Shaman, Mystics and Druids called it. All correct.

I'd a rough childhood full of positive and negative experiences. All experiences of which the Ego will consume as self identity. These experiences become the filter the Ego uses to show "I" the world, life, people, all things through as it focuses on the negative. Ego, (the Darkness within), feeds on negative energy vibrations hence its focus on negative thoughts and their associated emotions. Through Ego I saw everything as negative or "the worst of everything." My adult life was much the same until very recent. The truth is: All things in Nature, that is life, are neutral. The Ego is what makes things "Good or Bad." To my filter (Ego), all things ended up being or will be bad. I created my own misery and suffering or Buddha's "dukkha." Gautama Siddhartha - the "Buddha" (means "the awakened one") once said, "Whatever you do, wherever you go, you WILL encounter dukkha, and it will manifest in every situation sooner or later." I'd created my own delusion through which I saw and interacted with myself that pretended to be and covered up the reality of everyone and everything else. This is Hindu's maya and Ramana Maharshi said, "The mind is maya." I'd missed the point of life and created suffering and pain. This is what Jesus teaches is original sin.

Ego is complete identification, closer to possession, of the mind by the thinking mind. The unconscious and unaware mind (subconscious). In this, the Ego, you limit all things to words (labels, thoughts, opinions) of what YOU (the thinker) thinks all things are. It's distorted and wrong because it can only see the surface and cannot see or understand the depth all things really are. Nothing in Ego is reality, it's what you think it is. You misperceive and misunderstand all things because your perception is of the

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thoughts of your mind and NOT the TRUTH. This veil of delusion is how the human mind can make a human being less than human and label them an enemy. With that opinion and label, you can justify barbaric treatment and murder. The Ego needs enemies so it creates them. It wants separation, that is you alone because separation makes you weak. Through enemies "it" can keep you to itself and creates conflict which is negative energy to feed on... a psychic parasite. This is why most relationships are created because your demons (Darkness Ego) resonates with the other persons. This means: YOUR DEMONS PLAY WELL TOGETHER! In the beginning, everything is great. A match made in heaven. Then just as soon as the moment is right, pow! Everything changes one or the other, often both begin to be monsters to each other, abusive. It was a match made in HELL. Deep inside, BOTH of you in your Ego wanted or needed this abuse and pain. Ego relationships are dangerous, nasty and can turn deadly. Lust, anger, compulsive thoughts or behavior are all of the Ego.

Consciousness is the awareness of all things and it sees the truth of all things. It's the light truth. It's the path. It's joy and inner peace. It's true love. It's space and stillness. It's life. It's nature. It's GOD. It's GODDESS. It's spirit. It's the depth, the inner most you. It's "I Am". It's unknowable and indescribable. It's all things and nothing. None of these words are it, they are only words (thoughts, opinions, concepts) used as pointers to consciousness because words are limiting labels that cannot ever identify it. Ancient Zen masters taught "the finger pointing to the moon is NOT the moon itself." Consciousness can be felt deep within for those quiet enough of mind (stillness) to observe it. All ancient religions were the finger pointing to the awakening into consciousness. Consciousness is the oneness in which all things are connected and it can be felt, realized and observed. Consciousness is the realization you are NOT the voice constantly bubbling in your head (thoughts) and you then step out of that stream

of thoughts into the space of stillness of consciousness where thoughts can be created. Where all new things are born. You can see the truth of all things, especially Ego and identity Ego in all people. To realize the surface is a facade of Ego and not the person. This is why Ego CANNOT thrive in an awakened conscious person because they can see it in themselves for what it is through that consciousness.

As a teenaged Cherokee Native living on Cherokee territory, I once talked with a tribal elder. A wise man and showman in his own right of whom shared with me an ancient proverb of Native American wisdom. He said, "Inside of every person there are two great wolves. One is bright, full of love and happiness. The other is dark, full of hunger and hate. The wolves are constantly at WAR, fighting each other for dominance." I asked, "Which wolf wins?" The elder sat quiet for a couple of minutes then looked me in the eyes and replied, "The one you feed the most!" This is the battle of two minds, consciousness and Ego. The elder then continued, "and you have a mighty dark wolf in you usti yona (little bear)." If only I'd realized what the elder's wisdom meant back then. The problem is then I was an Ego ridden teen that knew it all and knew better than anyone else. Stubborn and ~~obstinate~~ obstinate. I'd never listen... and I didn't.

People do hateful and horrible things to each other in Ego and our history is riddled with it. We even have memorials and history books for reminders of our insanity. The biblical disciple of Jesus, Paul was the one who most clearly understood the actions of Ego and described this in the book of Romans. In Romans chapters 7 and 8 Paul writes how he thinks of and does things he doesn't want to, doesn't like and even hates. This entity has control of him therefore it isn't he who does these things but that entity inside him that is doing them. Paul called this entity the "sin" inside. Others

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would easily call it a daemon and say he's possessed. All would be accurate. Paul was being tempted and possessed by his Ego and at the time was not aware of what he was actually doing. Does this absolve him of his actions or more accurately his reactions? Yes and No! Yes because if one is NOT in control of nor aware of what they're actually doing, How can they be held responsible? Although, you allowed Ego's control by not being consciously aware and being fooled by Ego to identify with it as yourself. You ARE responsible for that as it is ~~all~~ life's purpose. The purpose of all living things, that is to say ALL THINGS, to bring consciousness into the world and reality.

I too, was lost in Ego, and have done great things for very greedy and selfish reasons and horrible things to all things undeserving. I've treated all things horribly with a multitude of disrespect and discontent. A complete lack of care. I've murdered many of life's (Goddess's) creatures just for the sport of killing and all of them has just as much if not more right to life than "I". I've hurt everyone I've loved... or thought I loved. True love knows no wanting, no desires, no agendas or lusts. None of my romantic relationships were authentic or appropriate. I never realized the deep issues and darkness, the mistreatments in both directions in all the relationships. I treated my mother with great disrespect in misplaced and unnecessary hate and fear. I've done a great many people wrong including friends, family, wives, myself, and the one person I'd do anything for, my daughter. All I did was self serving to feed the Ego. I'd cheated on my second wife in an inappropriate relationship with her teenage daughter, my adopted daughter. It's not surprising it lead to prison. In prison, it took getting to the point of attempting suicide and intense suffering in solitary confinement to finally awaken into consciousness. To understand what it all meant. To actually see the insanity of my thoughts and how I was living. To see how the Ego loves to blame others and make

enemies but never take responsibility. This is what all the ancient wisdom teachers of all ancient religions of the past were trying to teach. To get everyone to open their eyes and realize the insanity of what they do, how they think, and how they live... not to create a religion that will be greatly misunderstood and distorted even misused down the line. I've awakened into the spirituality of the New Consciousness.

I was so blind but now in consciousness NOW I SEE very clearly. I must deny myself daily, sometimes, multiple times a day to not be fooled and guided by Ego. This is what Jesus meant in his teaching to "deny thyself." This is to deny the Ego (the voice in your head) because IT IS NOT ME! I must choose peace and one with Life daily. I am aware of the awareness deep within and through it, I can do anything. In doing so, all things I do will be in alignment with consciousness (Goddess's Will). I am consciousness and am its vessel, its temple. Everyone and everything is. Consciousness is the "one" and is the "life" that is in all things. I love all things as myself because I realize and see I am all things, they are all me and yet, I'm nothing at all. Everything is one, connected in and through consciousness of which is LIFE... is the creator. In finding this consciousness, I've found myself. The "I Am" of being. I went to the Goddess (or God) to see, and realized "I" was looking at me. I see heaven inside. The love and empathy I now feel for all. Today's racial issues and murders are ripping at my heart. I cry for them for as Jesus said on the cross, "Forgive them for they KNOW NOT what they do." I've stopped fighting the river and now float with the flow of life. I've found the joy of NOW, each present moment with no wish or want to change it and no worry of tomorrow. A deep happiness I've never known.

I leave you with advice that I've modified slightly from what

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Eckhart Tolle, a modern wisdom teacher has given. If you do this at least once per day for a moment, for one year, it will have profound effects on your life, health, and mental well being. It's a simple mindfulness and spiritual exercise. Take a moment to simply focus on your breathing, your body, your sensations. Sit back and focus on your breath. Notice how it feels for the air to rush in and out. No thoughts, only focus on the inner feelings of the body and how it moves as you breathe in and out. Don't think about it, quietly feel it and the sensations of your body. Do this for about 10 breaths. Now take the time to feel the buzz and pulse of life energy flowing in your body. Don't think about it or think it is there. Without thought, just feel what is already there. If your mind thinks or wanders, try not to get caught up in the thoughts. Just gently direct your mind's focus back to the breaths and energy flow. This creates inner space for life and conscience. Even in Prison, one can have a spiritual journey and find life and themselves.