

Chapter 29 Being and Ego Deficiency from “Pearl Beyond Price” AH Almaas

“The realization of the Personal Essence, the personalization of the aspects and essential development in general involves a process of radical expansion. One experiences a steady expansion, in continual tiny increments, in one’s experience, consciousness, capacities and life. One’s mind is almost constantly being stretched, its limits pushed farther out. The changes are profound and deep, and affect the organism even at the cellular level. In fact one finds oneself always changing one’s mind about who one is and what life is all about.

The experience of expansion involves delight, beauty and a sense of adventure. But sooner or later one does come upon one’s personal limitations. When an individual is experiencing expansion in a certain realm, a part of him that feels he cannot do it, that the expansion is too much, comes to the surface. He starts feeling a sense of deficiency, smallness, weakness and inadequacy. This inadequacy is rarely felt as directly related to the process of realization itself, but manifests in some situation in the student’s life.

The root of this inadequacy is the sense of smallness and incapacity that keeps one at a certain level of development. We find that each individual functions at a certain level of capacity or expansion, and ability for functioning. On the level of work or in social relations, one must deal with limitations, which can manifest as a feeling of inadequacy or the fear of it.

Essential realization puts a much greater pressure on one’s capacities, and sooner or later a sense of inadequacy emerges. It usually does not indicate emotional disorder or immaturity, for under normal circumstances this inadequacy would probably never surface to consciousness. Every student, however normal and integrated she is on the ego level, at some point becomes aware of this sense of inadequacy. It is a universal phenomenon. One must deal with ego inadequacy in order to break through personal limits and attain a greater expansion; the sense of inadequacy is the main thing holding her back.

The state of inadequacy manifests in many forms, according to its various sources.

1. *The most typical is a state of feeling **deficient, inadequate, unable**, and at the same time scared of these feelings. The inadequacy here is an emotional state, a painful affect **of not being up to what one has to do in life**.*
2. *Inadequacy can manifest as a state of extreme **helplessness**. The individual feels weak, unable, incapable. The feeling is that one **cannot function**. One feels helpless*

and believes that the feeling of helplessness reflects a true state of incapacity to function.

3. The state of inadequacy is frequently experienced as a state of **inner emptiness**. This emptiness is felt as a state of deficiency and **lack**. The lack can be of Strength, Will, firmness of psychological structure, Value, purpose, Love etc. The affects can then be of feeling **castrated, impotent, weak, spineless, inept, awkward** and so on. One might react to the state with feelings of **shame, degradation and humiliation**.

4. The state of emptiness and the related affects of the various deficiencies are sometimes graphically experienced. One feels perforated, and deficient - as though there are holes in one's psyche. One feels like Swiss cheese parts of oneself are missing

5. The state of inadequacy and helplessness is frequently experienced as a sense of **weakness**, of having no structure and **no sense of inner support**. Sometimes one will feel as if there is no inner structure to one's body, as if one has no bones, nothing to hold one up; support one in taking action. One feels as if one's body is made of jelly, with no firmness, solidity or structure.

As if one's body is made of jelly; no firmness, solidity or structure. Like a Jellyfish.

6. The state frequently manifests as a feeling of **smallness**, not up to big tasks, not ready,

7. One of the most difficult manifestations of ego inadequacy is a state of **feeling alone and not supported**: hanging in mid air with **no support** underneath, nothing anywhere to hold onto; no handle or connection to anything, no Strength no Will; out of touch, lack of traction, also feeling castrated and impotent

8. Dreams of being inept, can't do the sword bends, the gun doesn't shoot, not ready for the exam

Defences Used To Repress Awareness of Inadequacy

There are two specific primary defenses and one general one which are typically employed to repress inadequacy. The state itself is emotionally very distressing and threatening, and the emotional reactions to it are very painful. The difficulty regarding this state depends on the extent to which it is believed to be a fact and not just an emotional state. When an individual is experiencing this state there is usually a deep degree of identification with it. It does not seem like a feeling, which will pass away or be resolved, like other emotional states. Very often the individual completely believes that it is an actual, accurate description of who he is. He does not think that he is feeling inadequate; he is convinced that he **is** inadequate and now the truth is out. This

point is very important for our latter discussion of this issue. But it also explains why there are such strong defenses against awareness of this state.

When one believes that the inadequacy is the actual fact about oneself, there is a deep, almost complete, hopelessness that it can ever be different. Believing it is hopeless, one has no reason to bring it to consciousness and deal with it. One finds no other alternative but to repress it, if possible, and hopefully forget all about it. Frequently, in fact, the repression is so deep and effective that only very deep, expanded states of Being push it into consciousness.

It is our understanding that this deep hopelessness is the primary reason most individuals do not grow and expand in any significant way in their lives. They deeply believe that they are too small and inadequate to do much growing. This leads to the general method of defense against awareness of inadequacy.

Since one deeply believes (usually unconsciously) that the inadequacy is not a state but a fact, and this causes a deep hopelessness about the possibility of expansion, one defends against this awareness by settling for a mediocre life. If there is any expansion it is small and usually only external.

The greater the state of inadequacy, and the deeper the hopelessness, the more restricted and confined one tries to keep one's life. One becomes conventional, pedantic, even petty, actively resisting movements towards expansion, and deliberately, but usually unconsciously, thwarting one's possibilities of growth. One becomes satisfied with a very small portion of one's potential, without even missing the greater unactualized part. One lives the small life of a small person.

This defense manifests in many ways: in intolerance of new truths or ways of living; in blindness about the true human potential, sometimes fortified with very logical, scientific or even religious arguments. It can manifest as the lack of interest in understanding, growth and development. It even manifests as the outright rejection of the dimension of Being and hence of one's true nature.

One interesting manifestation of this defense, which partially expresses the defended-against state of inadequacy, is the belief which many individuals have, that inner transformation is so special and unique that it is almost impossible for it to happen to them. It is definitely true that essential transformation is difficult, but it is equally true that it is our human potential. It is difficult but possible, and, with the right understanding, even probable.

From these observations we can see why inadequacy, and the defenses against it, inhibit many individuals from embarking on the process of transformation, and why those who do embark, do it in such a half-hearted way that nothing of significance

happens. To actually expand, or to truly believe in the possibility of expansion, challenges one's entrenched belief in one's hopelessness and inadequacy

Identifying with the inadequacy makes one feel and believe one cannot deal with it, because one will then be feeling inadequate! This is the paradox at the bottom of this issue which constitutes one important reason a teacher is generally needed for the process of realization. He is not needed for guidance only, but also for support, without which most students will feel helpless and inadequate to engage in the process. The fact that the teacher has successfully gone through the process makes it possible and believable that the student might do so and thus shakes her deep conviction in her hopelessness.

Nevertheless some individuals manage to believe in their inadequacy and helplessness in spite of the presence of individuals who embody essential expansion, in spite of the available knowledge and guidance. These individuals end up believing that the realized individuals are special in some way, or that their expansion is not real, and hence can be dismissed. Many students report this defense in some of their friends, who fail to see the student's expansion and growth and thus are not awakened from their comfortable slumber about their own condition.

This general defense is sincerely and innocently manifested by Lily in the above case report. It is rare that someone will admit this fear of expansion; most individuals will regard it as shameful and humiliating.

*One of the main ego defenses against the state of inadequacy is that of **grandiosity**, as we discussed at the beginning of this chapter. One comes to believe and to behave as if one has no such inadequacy. The defense is not only that one is not inadequate, but that one is the best, strongest, most able. One feels one can do anything. This defense is a complete denial of the state of inadequacy through a reaction formation, which is usually called the grandiose self, or a grandiose belief about once omnipotence. In most individuals, this defense is unconscious, and one must look with a discerning eye to see it in operation in one's life. But it always comes to the foreground when the state of inadequacy is pushing towards consciousness.*

We again give the case report of Jordan from the beginning of this chapter, for it shows clearly how the grandiosity defense relates to the state of inadequacy.

I have been bouncing back and forth between feeling inadequate, afraid deficient, etc, and feeling grandiose, manic like I could do anything I wanted, Both of these poles are painful, I have been aware of all the energy it takes to maintain the illusion that I am the best, most advanced, most together, etc Both feelings of inadequacy and feelings of grandiosity lead me to compare and judge.

He has been in a group for over 5 years, and has gone through some of his main character defenses and inhibitions. He now has the success that he wanted, the job he desired and a satisfied married life. But for months now, he has been feeling agitated. He cannot stop doing one thing after another, managing so many jobs and commitments and interests that he now has no time to relax. None of his activities is particularly difficult, but to be involved in all of them is very demanding and takes all his time and energy. He does not truly need to do all of them, but he somehow cannot see that. He keeps complaining about how busy and hurried he is, but he will not stop. Exploring this manifestation finally reveals its dynamic cause, which he described in the report above.

His excessive activities and involvement are the expression of his grandiosity, of his belief in his unlimited capacities. The grandiosity has always been present in his life, but did not become so clear until he was truly successful, and was able to see that there is no real need for all that he is doing. This then exposed the inadequacy that had been warded off by his belief in his omnipotence. So for a period of time he was feeling either the state of inadequacy or the grandiose defense against it. It was a trying time for him, for which he had to marshal all his true capacities and sincerity. In time he managed to resolve the issue.

*The second defense normally employed against the state of deficiency is **negative merging**. The individual avoids the feeling of helplessness and impotence by becoming embroiled in all kinds of negative states and interactions; thus he also avoids feeling separate and alone. The negative merging is a way to feel contact and union with another - unconsciously the mother - and hence supported. This defense has many important functions, although it is emotionally painful. It protects the individual from feeling helpless and alone. It protects him from feeling suspended in mid-air without anything to hold onto. It gives him a sense of traction, and hence relieves him from the terror of feeling he was going to slip into oblivion.*

The following reports by Penny quoted earlier in this chapter, clearly shows how this defense is employed. She writes about a certain group session:

In talking to you at this Saturday night meeting I spoke of my response to my private session with you on Friday. I said I had a great deal of preference for the sandpaper state I was experiencing. I was experiencing it as a sense of negative merging with my mother. It is a reliving of my negative connection with her.

I was feeling a desire to get through this and see what is on the other side of it. You wanted to know why I wanted the change. I told you I felt scared but wanted to know what else was there. You asked what I was afraid of, and I said, "loss of attachment, losing mother, being all alone, floating in space, etc." Then you wanted to know why I was afraid of being alone, unattached, and so on. After feeling totally spaced out came the answer. I felt inadequate. The reason I did not want to let go of the sandpaper state (or negative merging) was that I feel inadequate without my mother. It is not that I so much loved the negative merging, but it is preferable to

feeling totally inadequate as a person. Next I began to feel sad and scared, scared to look forward and sad about the feeling I needed to have the negative merging around me. Then I felt even more terrified in my chest. This led to deep sadness, compassionate sadness because I really had no choice when I was a baby. There was nothing I could do because I was inadequate in the world, and my mother was the only one to take care of me.

Now the feeling of inadequacy spread, I felt like a blob, like a squishy, fleshy mass, a gooey mass with no definition. I felt hopeless, empty, worthless, useless, like nothing at all. I did not want anything because I did not know enough to know what I wanted; totally dependent and yet unaware of who or how or where the source of my dependency might be, totally deficient and inadequate.

Penny's description is very lucid regarding both the defense of negative merging and the state of inadequacy in its various manifestations. It is clear in her report how difficult, painful and terrifying this state can be. We must also note that it took her several years of deep exploration to be able to confront and tolerate this state, which was deeply hidden in her, and quite unapparent in her usual manifestations as a successful, warm and well functioning human being. We will finish her report in which a real resolution becomes possible in a later chapter.

*Another defense against inadequacy, less common than the above two, but related to them, is the schizoid defense of **isolation and withdrawal**. The inadequacy is sometimes experienced as an incapacity to interact with others, to engage in human object-relations. One feels too inadequate and deficient to make contact. Then one defends oneself against this deficiency in relating by abandoning interpersonal relations altogether. One isolates oneself from others, builds a detached wall around oneself and withdraws deep within.*

Guntrip recognized this relationship between the schizoid mechanism and inadequacy. He saw that the schizoid defensive isolation and detachment is a defense against, and is primarily due to a fundamental inadequacy, which he termed ego weakness. He writes:

"Ego weakness consists not in lack of energy or innate ability, but in this unremitting state of basic fear and distress and lack of self-confidence of which the individual feels ashamed, and of which he develops considerable secondary fears.

The most obvious ways in which the person with a basically weak and immature ego seeks to protect himself in face of outer world pressures and inner world fears, is to hide the part of himself that is a child facing

the life that feels too big for him, behind central ego detachment... all the psycho neurotic defense has come into play."

The issue of inadequacy is a central question in Guntrip's book. He develops the understanding that it is the core problem of ego structure, that all structural problems and conflicts are ultimately due to this basic ego weakness:

"The unremitting and strenuous efforts to overcome or hide this weakness, which they do not know how, genuine, to grow out of, constitutes, together with the weakness itself, the mass of psychopathological experience and behavior, as seen not only in patients but also in the general low mental health in the community. The struggle to force a weak ego to face life, or, even more fundamentally the struggle to preserve an ego at all, is the root cause of psychotic psychosomatic and psychoneurotic tensions and illnesses."

He sees this issue also as the main problem to be resolved in therapy; he sees the various neuroses not as due only to repression of needs but mainly as ways to deal with this basic weakness of ego. He regards the neuroses, in a sense, as specific defensive constellations to ward off this ego deficiency.

"The psychoneurotic defensive states represent rather the struggle to force a pseudo-adult pattern which masks the frightened child inside."

Guntrip's analysis is fascinating and certainly in accord with our findings in the process of interviewing realization for normal and neurotic individuals. His understanding that ego weakness is the basic problem in psychopathology is, in our estimation, a brilliant breakthrough in understanding ego structure. His emphasis on this issue, we believe, reflects a deep understanding of ego, which regretfully has not been absorbed by mainstream object relations theory. It is understandable that he has this emphasis, because, as we have noted before, he understands the role of Being in ego development. We will show, in some detail, the importance and centrality of ego inadequacy in the structure of ego. We will develop an understanding of this state, that will bring about a very deep and profound understanding of ego and its structures.

Ego inadequacy is one of the issues that we call "diamond issues" in the Diamond Approach. It is a universal issue, which is not due to specific personal history but is a consequence of the nature of ego. A diamond issue is an ego issue that results from identification with ego. Its presence is inseparable from ego identifications, regardless of how pathological or healthy the ego structure is. Only the severity of the issue is determined by the particular personal history. Guntrip has a deep and detailed understanding of the issue of ego inadequacy, but he does not go all the way to seeing it as an issue for all egos.

Since it is a process of moving from ego to Being, the process of inner realization deals largely with diamond issues. All major emotional issues and conflicts we have discussed in this book are diamond issues. They are characteristic of ego structure, and do not necessarily reflect mental pathology. Of course there are individual variations in the way an issue manifests, which reflect personal history, but the basic pattern and resolution are universal. So our discussion in this book of the various issues applies to everyone. Every individual has them as part of his ego structure, unless he is not identified with ego.

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### **Chapter 30 Origins of Ego Deficiency** from “Pearl Beyond Price” AH Almaas

*P 370 ... Since, as object relations theory states, ego weakness is due to incomplete or inadequate ego integration and individuation, and since, ego development as conceived of in object relations theory is an incomplete process, every ego structure will naturally have some inadequacy. The individuality of ego is not the real, true and final integration of the person.*

*This means that ego weakness will disappear only in the realization of the Personal Essence, the real person of Being. As long as one takes himself to be an individual and a self based on self image, there is bound to be a basic sense of inadequacy at the core of the identification. Ego inevitably contains a deep, basic sense of, and fear of, inadequacy. This is of course why the development of the Personal Essence ultimately exposes the inadequacy; it is the antithesis of the arising fullness, integrity, confidence and strength of Being. The sense of ego inadequacy disappears when Essence arises, indicating that the state of deficiency is due to lack of contact with Being....*

*The realization of the Personal Essence makes it more tolerable for the individual to confront and deal with ego weakness. It gives him both the inner support and the hope that it is possible to deal with such a profound sense of inadequacy.*

*The study of the severe ego weaknesses seen in psychopathology is useful for our exploration because its extremity exposes something that is usually not seen; it exposes a characteristic of the ego by exaggerating it. It is true that the more integrated one's ego the less one feels, or is affected by, this sense of deficiency; but if one goes deeply into himself, exposing the deep layers of the ego structure, he is bound sooner or later, to come face-to-face with this dreaded basic characteristic of his individuality.*

p373 Ego inadequacy as a basic characteristic of ego individuality... is a result of actually exploring the condition of ego inadequacy in the cases of hundreds of normal individuals, some of whom have come to the point of its actual resolution.

Here we will describe some of the exploration, which substantiates our understanding of ego inadequacy. We can begin by investigating the specific defenses against the state of inadequacy. Each of these defenses can be understood to reflect an absence of a certain essential aspect, and involves a regression of ego in an attempt to reach the needed support equivalent to the missing essential aspect. To summarize the main defenses as they relate to this regression:

1. *Grandiosity*. This is a regression which is an attempt to return to the feelings of grandeur and omnipotence that characterize the practicing period of the separation individuation process. We have pointed out that in this period, though the grandiose feelings are delusional with respect to the psychophysical apparatus, they are actually characteristic of the *Essential Self*, the aspect which is dominant in that period.
2. *Negative merging*. This regression is an attempt to regain the omnipotent comfort and support of the good merged state, characteristic of the dual unity of the symbiotic phase; in other words, it is an attempt to regain the loving support of the *Merging Essence*. We saw when we discussed the issues of merging that trying to regain this aspect inevitably results in negative merging.
3. *Isolation and detachment*. This regression is an attempt to regain the sense of differentiation and strength characteristic of the differentiation sub-phase. This defense gives the individual a sense of isolation which is actually an extreme sense of separateness. This happens when one feels too inadequate to be present and still feel separate, reflecting the absence of the *Strength Essence*.

An extreme development of the sense of grandiosity in childhood leads, of course, to the development of the *narcissistic personality* organization.

The extreme of the defense of negative merging in childhood leads to certain forms of psychosis. Reverting to negative merging is termed *refusion of self and object* representations.

The extreme of the defensive detachment leads to the development of the *schizoid* character.

374 The state of deficiency itself is a reflection of difficulties in the *rapprochement* phase, indicating the absence of the aspect of the *Personal Essence*.

*From the perspective of Being, then the major mental pathologies can be understood thus:*

- *Psychosis is a reflection of the absence of, or conflicts about, the Merging Essence in the symbiotic stage.*
- *The schizoid condition is a reflection of the absence of, or conflicts about the Strength Essence, mainly in the differentiation subphase.*
- *Pathological narcissism is a reflection of the absence of, or conflicts about, the Essential Self, primarily in the practicing sub-phase*
- *The Borderline condition is a reflection of the absence of, or conflicts about the Personal Essence, primarily in the rapprochement subphase.*
- *Neurosis is a reflection of the absence of, or conflicts about, the essential aspects involved in the Oedipus complex.*

### ***Loss of Contact With Being***

*The defenses against inadequacy - negative merging, grandiosity, and defensive detachment - are typically resorted to by the child at the beginning of the rapprochement phase, as we discussed in our exploration of the issues of that phase. We saw that the child resorts to these defenses especially when the environment does not respond in a phase-appropriate manner, in order to ward off the sense of helplessness, deflation and dependency that results from two developmental realizations at that time. The first is the disappointment resulting from the collapse of the sense of grandeur and omnipotence. The second is the realization of his separateness from mother, due to perceptual and cognitive maturation.*

*Thus it seems certain that ego inadequacy originates in this phase, at the end of the practicing period and at the beginning of the rapprochement phase, around age one and a half. At that time the sense of omnipotence and grandeur is lost, as we discussed in chapter 21 due to the increasing cathexis of the body. At that time the child has substantially shifted his cathexis from Being to the psychophysical apparatus, as part of the process of ego development. He gains physical and mental wisdom in this way, but at the same time loses his connection to Being.*

*Thus his identity has largely shifted from Being to ego, through the developing cathexis of the body, and also due to the de-cathexis of the Essential Self. This process is of course taking place through the formation of self-representations.*

*In object relations theory the sense of helplessness and inadequacy at this critical time of development is seen to be due to the realistic abandonment of omnipotence and the equally realistic perception of separateness. From the perspective of Being, however, this is not completely accurate; these realizations are a result of cathecting the body*

*and identifying progressively with it, and then looking at reality from the perspective of the body and the physical senses. Since at the same time there is a de-cathexis of Being and a loss of identity with it, the child is no longer perceiving the world from the perspective of Essence with its different capacities.*

*It should now be clear that the ego inadequacy which appears at the beginning of rapprochement, which occurs simultaneously with the shift of identity from Being to the psychophysical apparatus, is due to the loss of contact with Being. We have also seen evidence that the defenses against this state are actually attempts to connect with certain essential aspects....*

*It should now be clear that the ego inadequacy which appears at the beginning of rapprochement, which occurs simultaneously with the shift of identity from being to the psychophysical apparatus, is due to the loss of contact with Being.....*

*The various modes of the sense of inadequacy are connected with the absence of certain essential aspects. The sense of castration is the absence of the Will aspect, while that of impotence is absence of the Strength aspect. The sense of worthlessness is the absence of the Value aspect, and the sense of insignificance (or of being nothing), is the absence of the Essential Self. These connections have been made by many students who experienced the state of inadequacy as a deficient emptiness (which is always a result of losing Essence), and then explored the deficiency.*

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Chapter 31 Resolution of Ego Deficiency from “Pearl Beyond Price” AH Almaas

Given that ego is so cut off from the real resources of being, one might wonder where it gets its strength and energy! Part of the answer is that individuals vary in terms of the rigidity of their identifications with ego structures, and as we saw in our discussion of maturity and metabolism, the less rigid or the more flexible the ego individuality is, the more permeable it is to essence and its resources. Under such conditions, one has available some real strength and energy, at least some of the time. However, the sense of who one is, is never devoid of the sense of inadequacy. The self of ego is what is inadequate. Students who are experiencing essential states still believe they are inadequate. This is a result of identifying with the ego individuality. Individuals believe consciously or unconsciously that they are truly inadequate because they believe they are the ego individuality, and this individuality is actually basically inadequate. It is hopeless for the ego individuality to become free of its inadequacy; this is why most individuals identify so much with

inadequacy and hopelessness. When one identifies with ego then one is, ... truly inadequate and hopeless.

This fact confronts all students of essential realization at some point. As they experience essential states and perceptions, they become hopeful that they can become adequate. But they are ultimately frustrated and disappointed when they realize, over and over, that this is completely impossible. They cannot be completely adequate while they continue being who they have been in the past. They must ultimately let go of the identity with ego. This is the metamorphosis known in spiritual traditions as "self realization" and constitutes a profound shift in identity...

When they are dealing with this issue many people complain of kidney tension and pain connected with physical contractions at the adrenal glands, especially the one over the left kidney.

This subtle contraction at the adrenal glands, generates more adrenaline, creating an excess of a particular energy that feels active, speedy, unsettled, agitated and excited. This is the primary energy that ego uses, manifesting in states of fear, agitation, anger and worry. One cannot sit down, cannot be calm, cannot settle, physically or mentally. This is what Jordan meant when he said he felt manic when he was feeling grandiose. This is in contrast to the energy of the strength essence, which is calm, and also excited in the sense of vibrant aliveness and which makes one feel more present and clear.

When the blockage against the inadequacy dissolves, and one feels the state itself; the hole at the left kidney expands and is felt to be centred at the solar plexus - the location for the emergence and operation of the Will aspect, and so with the hole there the feeling is of the absence of support, confidence and solidity of the Will. This shows the importance of the Will for the resolution of the inadequacy. We have already discussed how any ego activity leads to blocking the Will. We will now turn to the discussion of how ego inadequacy is resolved.

It is clear from our discussion that complete resolution is possible only with a thorough shift of identity to Being; later chapters will elucidate what this means. Here we will discuss the major steps in this process of resolution, focusing in detail only on the points relevant both to resolving ego inadequacy and to the development of the Personal Essence. Although the process of self-realization is much larger and more involved than what we can cover here, we can understand its main steps and issues by understanding the resolution of inadequacy.

A major step towards resolution of the state of inadequacy is in the integration of the third objective dimension of essence. The entry to this dimension occurs by confronting and understanding the defensive nature of ego. One need not exert any effort to focus one's attention on this aspect of ego.

1. *The defensive function is usually at its peak when one is dealing with ego inadequacy. The strongest and most tenacious defenses and resistances come up to ward off the awareness of inadequacy. One's whole consciousness contracts. One might feel heavy, thick and defended. One feels defensive and resistant to going within. The consciousness becomes dull and insensitive. The tensions in the body become intense; they can become so severe that one gets headaches. The impression at such times is that the individual is defending himself as if he is fighting for dear life. In fact, it turns out that this is one of the fears generated by ego inadequacy. Some individuals become afraid that if they feel so vulnerable and helpless they might die. Others become afraid that they will get so small that they will disappear.*

2. *The defensive function of ego is at its height, against both the inadequacy and its feared consequences. These fears are reasonable in two ways. The first is that ego inadequacy is a reliving of an earlier experience in very early childhood, when one was actually vulnerable, helpless and dependent. Although we discussed the state of inadequacy in terms of the beginning of the phase of rapprochement, its emergence or development is a gradual process that starts much earlier, in the first months of life, because the process of cathecting physical reality starts so early. Many students actually remember themselves as infants, alone, helpless and scared.*

This kind of memory might be a composite of many experiences at different early times, but it does reflect some experiences in the earliest months of life. Since the individual normally identifies deeply with the state of deficiency it becomes understandable why, when this state becomes conscious, it generates so much terror and fear of death. This reflects the actual helplessness of the psychophysical organism at such early times.

The other reason for the terror is that at such early times, at the beginning of ego development, ego structures are still unstable, shaky and not unified. Since one identifies with such structures, in these experiences there is a natural fear of disappearing, for one is aware of one's sense of self as shaky, unstable, weak and vulnerable. In fact the experience can lead to a kind of death which is the disappearance of these unstable and early formed structures ...

3. *At some point the individual disappears completely, and only the emptiness is left. We see this in the following report from Jackson, as a result of his working on the pain he feels with the people he works with. He writes:*

You ask me about the pain - to understand it and where it comes from. The pain makes me feel very small, very young. I feel as though I am supposed to be strong even before I could sustain my own life. I am very young and I am crying, no one comes - I cry harder and still no one comes - I feel more alone and isolated and

smaller - I hurt and am sad to be so alone and feel smaller. You said, let these feelings happen and when you say this I feel a shudder of terror go through me, a deeper terror that if I get smaller there will be nothing left - nothing even to feel the pain. At first I do not want to get smaller- then I see and feel me getting smaller and more alone, until puff- there is nothing there. No me- no crying- no sound. just quiet, a deep quiet - still, dark - black dark - calm, no sound. A strange kind of awareness that nothing is being observed and I am not present to observe. There is nothing except blackness - - empty, yet not lacking - - black and not devoid of light - a rich emptiness - nothing desired and nothing wanted.

Something on the periphery is moving fast and jumping up and down, as if to catch my attention, as if it did not understand (or maybe it did all too well). And even this fades and again, only Black, It is difficult to explain this richness and fullness. I even taste a sweetness in the back of my mouth. I have no desire to move away or move - I seem to move without moving, My body seems to be of no value. Peace - quiet - fulfillment. I hear your voice as though it is in the Blackness, I have no fear, as if I already know somehow.

4. The result of experiencing such an emptiness is usually peace and clarity but the ego does not know that will happen. This peace is anticipated as death by various structures of ego.

5. When one finally allows the state of vulnerability, it can manifest as a state of defenselessness. This indicates the dropping of the defensiveness of ego. Such letting go means the abandonment, usually transitory, of certain deep identification systems. These constitute the core of the defensive structures of ego. The result is again the manifestation of emptiness, this time vast and of immeasurable depth. It is a deeper dimension of space.

6. This development then leads to the emergence of a new essential aspect; this aspect is actually a certain combination of essential aspects, specifically of Universal Will and Truth, functioning as one aspect or presence. When his presence is embodied, it feels awesome in its power and solidity. One feels that he can handle anything, that nothing can sway him if he does not want it to. This presence is that of Will in a deeper, more expanded form: more powerful, more solid, more immovable and its support is awesome.

An example of this development is the case of Jill, whom we discussed in the section on rapprochement. We find her here in the middle of a big expansion in her work, both in terms of working with more people and using different modalities. She has been working hard and feeling successful and personally fulfilled in terms of her work. She has been complaining of being tired, in her private teaching sessions. We work on a dream of hers,

Of being small and young. This leads to the perception of some distortion in her body image. She then starts experiencing the fullness of the Personal Essence, which is not a new state for her. But she realizes the presence of a hard plate of tension, as if she needs such a plate to support her presence. The hard plate of tension turns out to be an ego defense she uses as support in order to do what she needs to do in her life. This exposes a contraction at the spleen and left kidney area. This then exposes some deficient emptiness that expands into space. She then starts experiencing a sense of a solid presence in her lower body but there is still resistance to it. This leads to a discussion of her life, how she lives it and the need for

inner discipline.

The more she understands the meaning of inner discipline and the need for it in her life, to support her true accomplishment and work, the more she feels the solid presence of will expanding with its sense of power and immensity. She then experiences herself as an immense and powerful presence, solid and immovable, which gives her the feeling of being an adult.

The Citadel

The experience of this new dimension of Will is of being supported in a specific way. One feels one does not need ego defenses, because one now has the real “defense”. This aspect of Essence is sometimes specifically experienced as the defense of Essence. This is one reason we call this aspect the Citadel. The sense is of being supported, protected, defended by a presence that is as formidable and invulnerable as a citadel. It is the presence of Essence as the defender of the Truth.

One realizes that the defensive functions of ego are actually a reflection of this aspect, an imitation of it, and hence unreal and distorted. Here one begins to understand what is needed to protect one’s essential realization, so that it is not lost but rather continues to develop securely. It is the need for the defensive functions of ego that cuts one off from Being. And this need is due to a large extent, to the unconscious identification with the inadequacy of ego.

While the aspect of the Citadel gives one a sense of solid support and formidable protection, one feels it is okay to be. The presence of this aspect gives one the feeling of being grown up, able to take care of oneself, and live one’s life the way one chooses, in a real undefensive manner. As far as we can tell this aspect seems not to be available in early childhood, which might partly account for the fact that in the process of cathecting the body, Being is decathected.

When the Citadel aspect is present, it gives the individual the possibility of looking at ego inadequacy in an objective and unemotional way. One feels so supported that the state of inadequacy loses its threatening property. The Citadel gives one the sense of solidity and

support, with no grandiose ideas. One is clearly aware that it is an essential presence, and not a physical or mental power, that it is a support for Being and not for ego.

The sense of support and protection related to this aspect is much deeper than the state of awesome immensity. One begins to learn that the realization of this aspect requires from one something specific. It is not a matter only of inner understanding. It is a state in which Will and Truth are harmonized, are functioning as one state. This means that its influence is to manifest Will in the service of Truth. It is actually solid Will in the service and support of objective Truth. To embody (realize) this aspect, one's actions, and all of one's life, must function according to objective Truth.

At this point one learns, usually through the difficulties of trial and error, that one cannot continue to experience Being if one lives his life according to the belief that he is the ego individuality. One's action, behavior, style of life (all manifestations of Will) must be in harmony with the Truth of Being. One cannot indulge in false identifications, regard essential experience as some sort of reward and expect to live the life of Essence.

The aspect of the Citadel provides guidance for how to live one's life according to the Truth of Being. It is referred to as "objective conscience" for it is like the conscience of Essence. It gives one support and protection i.e. is present and available only when one is living according to the Truth of Essence. In other words, its presence (realization) is equivalent to living according to the laws of Being.

Realizing this aspect means many practical things. One must change one's practical life in a way that supports essential life, rather than impeding it. One's activities, interests, associations, relationships and so on, now have to be according to the Truth, in the service of and in harmony with Essence.

Living the life of Truth is the true meaning of inner discipline. One actually must discipline oneself in a certain way. However, it is not the usual understanding of discipline. It is not according to rules one has in the mind – which is the control of the superego – and it is not according to someone else's idea of discipline. It is very personal and depends on the particular person and his situation in life. She has to find her own way, her own application of objective Truth, in her life. And she can do this by realizing the Citadel, by using it as her true conscience.

This true life is seen to be the real support and protection of Essence and its development. The inner state itself is not enough. The state itself, in fact, will not be present if one lives according to lies and delusions. One has to become real or this aspect is not permanently attained. If it is not attained then one cannot resolve ego inadequacy. This aspect becomes primary for such resolution.

This is understandable when we remember that the inadequacy is primarily due to abandoning Being and identifying with the body (the psychophysical organism), and looking at life and living it only from this limited perspective. The way of life of the individuality of ego is based on partial truth, and hence on falsehood. To live according to the ego perspective is to live a life that supports inadequacy, in fact that is based on it. To live without taking into consideration the Truth of Being is to perpetuate inadequacy by living according to it. This is exactly what the child learns to do in the process of ego development, creating the defensiveness of ego.

The hope of resolving inadequacy is in the realization of the Citadel aspect. This implies that one is willing to live one's life from the perspective of objective Truth which takes into consideration the fact of Being, without denying physical reality. Although all students deal with ego inadequacy only a minority move steadily towards resolving it. This is because not many are willing to adjust their lives according to objective Truth. This deep surrender is rare and requires a great deal of maturity.

When the Citadel is realized it creates the possibility of experiencing the first major resolution of ego inadequacy. It is the presence of the Citadel that allows the hole or deficient emptiness of inadequacy to be replaced by the various aspects of Essence. This happens specifically first by the emergence of the Merging Essence in the solar plexus – the location is important but not absolutely necessary – exactly where the inadequacy is usually experienced.

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We must remember that the state of inadequacy experienced in childhood is due primarily to two causes; the feeling of impotence and castration when the sense of omnipotence is lost, and the feeling of helplessness and dependency when separateness is perceived and believed. The presence of the Citadel remedies the impotence and castration. It is also a state of Will, which gives one innate confidence. This allows one to stop the ego activity and desire that block Will and create negative merging. This in turn leads to the Merging Essence which remedies the helplessness due to separateness.

The important point here is that the Merging Essence manifests – the good mother is gained – without sacrificing the Truth. Because of the presence of the Merging aspect one does not feel alone and isolated although one is living the life of Truth. The individuality of ego sacrifices the Truth of Being to avoid isolation and the loss of mother's good image. But with the support of the Citadel one lives connected to Being, in real conscience, and is able to experience the sweetness and love that the mother's good image is supposed to provide.

The realization of the Citadel actualized the Merging Essence right at the site of the inadequacy. This then brings about the presence of the Personal Essence along with the heart qualities and the Diamond Guidance.

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