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[Previous Section](#)

[Next Section](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

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[The Little Garden Home](#)

II. The Ego and False Autonomy

T-4.II.1. It is reasonable to ask how the mind could ever have made the ego. 2 In fact, it is the best question you could ask. 3 There is, however, no point in giving an answer in terms of the past because the past does not matter, and history would not exist if the same errors were not being repeated in the present. 4 Abstract thought applies to knowledge because knowledge is completely impersonal, and examples are irrelevant to its understanding. 5 Perception, however, is always specific, and therefore quite concrete.

T-4.II.2. Everyone makes an ego or a self for himself, which is subject to enormous variation because of its instability. 2 He also makes an ego for everyone else he perceives, which is equally variable. 6 3 Their interaction is a process that alters both, because they were not made by or with the Unalterable. 4 It is important to realize that

this alteration can and does occur as readily when the interaction takes place in the mind as when it involves physical proximity. 5 Thinking about another ego is as effective in changing relative perception as is physical interaction. 6 There could be no better example that the ego is only an idea and not a fact.

T-4.II.3. Your own state of mind is a good example of how the ego was made. 2 When you threw knowledge away it is as if you never had it. 3 This is so apparent that one need only recognize it to see that it does happen. 4 If this occurs in the present, why is it surprising that it occurred in the past? 5 Surprise is a reasonable response to the unfamiliar, though hardly to something that occurs with such persistence. 6 But do not forget that the mind need not work that way, even though it does work that way now.

T-4.II.4. Think of the love of animals for their offspring, and the need they feel to protect them. 2 That is because they regard them as part of themselves. 3 No one dismisses something he considers part of himself. 4 You react to your ego much as God does to His creations, 'd0with love, protection and charity. 5 Your reactions to the self you made are not surprising. 6 In fact, they resemble in many ways how you will one day react to your real creations, which are as timeless as you are. 7 The question is not how you respond to the ego, but what you believe you are. 8 Belief is an ego function, and as long as your origin is open to belief you are regarding it from an ego viewpoint. 9 When teaching is no longer necessary you will merely know God. 10 Belief that there is another way of perceiving is the loftiest idea of which ego thinking is capable. 11 That is because it contains a hint of recognition that the ego is not the Self.

T-4.II.5. Undermining the ego's thought system must be perceived as painful, even though this is anything but true. 2 Babies scream in rage if you take away a knife or scissors, although they may well harm themselves if you do not. 3 In this sense you are still a baby. 4 You have no sense of real self-preservation, and are likely to decide that you need precisely what would hurt you most. 5 Yet whether or not you recognize it now, you have agreed to cooperate in the effort to become both harmless and helpful, attributes that must go together. 6 Your attitudes even toward this are necessarily conflicted, because all attitudes are ego-based. 7 This will not last. 8 Be patient a while and remember that the outcome is as certain as God. 7

T-4.II.6. Only those who have a real and lasting sense of abundance can be truly charitable. 2 This is obvious when you consider what is involved. 3 To the ego, to give anything implies that you will have to do without it. 4 When you associate giving with sacrifice, you give only because you believe that you are somehow getting something better, and can therefore do without the thing you give. 5 "Giving to get" is an inescapable law of the ego, which always evaluates itself in relation to other egos. 6 It is therefore continually preoccupied with the belief in scarcity that gave rise to it. 7 Its whole perception of other egos as real is only an attempt to convince itself that *it* is real. 8 "Self-esteem" in ego terms means nothing more than that the ego has deluded itself into accepting its reality, and is therefore temporarily less predatory. 9 This "self-esteem" is always vulnerable to stress, a term which refers to any perceived threat to the ego's existence.

T-4.II.7. The ego literally lives by comparisons. 2 Equality is beyond its grasp, and

charity becomes impossible. 3 The ego never gives out of abundance, because it was made as a substitute for it. 4 That is why the concept of "getting" arose in the ego's thought system. 5 Appetites are "getting" mechanisms, representing the ego's need to confirm itself. 6 This is as true of body appetites as it is of the so-called "higher ego needs." 7 Body appetites are not physical in origin. 8 The ego regards the body as its home, and tries to satisfy itself through the body. 9 But the idea that this is possible is a decision of the mind, which has become completely confused about what is really possible.

T-4.II.8. The ego believes it is completely on its own, which is merely another way of describing how it thinks it originated. 2 This is such a fearful state that it can only turn to other egos and try to unite with them in a feeble attempt at identification, or attack them in an equally feeble show of strength. 3 It is not free, however, to open the premise to question, because the premise is its foundation. 4 The ego is the mind's belief that it is completely on its own. 5 The ego's ceaseless attempts to gain the spirit's acknowledgment and thus establish its own existence are useless. 6 Spirit in its knowledge is unaware of the ego. 7 It does not attack it; it merely cannot conceive of it at all. 8 While the ego is equally unaware of spirit, it does perceive itself as being rejected by something greater than itself. 9 This is why self-esteem in ego terms must be delusional. 10 The creations of God do not create myths, although creative effort can be turned to mythology. 8 It can do so, however, only under one condition; what it makes is then no longer creative. 12 Myths are entirely perceptual, and so ambiguous in form and characteristically good-and-evil in nature that the most benevolent of them is not without fearful connotations.

T-4.II.9. Myths and magic are closely associated, since myths are usually related to ego origins, and magic to the powers the ego ascribes to itself. 2 Mythological systems generally include some account of "the creation," and associate this with its particular form of magic. 3 The so-called "battle for survival" is only the ego's struggle to preserve itself, and its interpretation of its own beginning. 4 This beginning is usually associated with physical birth, because it is hard to maintain that the ego existed before that point in time. 5 The more "religiously" ego-oriented may believe that the soul existed before, and will continue to exist after a temporary lapse into ego life. 6 Some even believe that the soul will be punished for this lapse. 7 However, salvation does not apply to spirit, which is not in danger and does not need to be salvaged.

T-4.II.10. Salvation is nothing more than "right-mindedness," which is not the One-mindedness of the Holy Spirit, but which must be achieved before One-mindedness is restored. 2 Right-mindedness leads to the next step automatically, because right perception is uniformly without attack, and therefore wrong-mindedness is obliterated. 3 The ego cannot survive without judgment, and is laid aside accordingly. 4 The mind then has only one direction in which it can move. 5 Its direction is always automatic, because it cannot but be dictated by the thought system to which it adheres.

T-4.II.11. It cannot be emphasized too often that correcting perception is merely a temporary expedient. 2 It is necessary only because misperception is a block to knowledge, while accurate perception is a steppingstone towards it. 3 The whole value of right perception lies in the inevitable realization that *all* perception is unnecessary. 4 This

removes the block entirely. 5 You may ask how this is possible as long as you appear to be living in this world. 6 That is a reasonable question. 7 You must be careful, however, that you really understand it. 8 Who is the "you" who are living in this world? 9 Spirit is immortal, and immortality is a constant state. 10 It is as true now as it ever was or ever will be, because it implies no change at all. 11 It is not a continuum, nor is it understood by being compared to an opposite. 9 Knowledge never involves comparisons. 13 That is its main difference from everything else the mind can grasp.

[Previous Section](#)

[Next Section](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Search the Course](#)

[We invite you to comment on this section.](#)

[The Little Garden Home](#)

>