



2.7.3 Egoism and Selflessness

In religion, the development into a more selfless person plays a central role. It describes the fundamental direction that true spiritual growth must take.

To carry out this process within ourselves, we must distinguish between self-centeredness and selflessness.

In practice, however, this often proves to be difficult.

The Challenge of Distinguishing Selflessness from Self-Centeredness

Change in the Process of Development

An infant can only focus on its own needs. One could say that human beings are born in a state of maximal egoism.

However, we expect that as people grow, they will increasingly consider and work for the common good.

For this reason, we should always consider age when making judgments.

With children and adolescents, we usually do this quite naturally.

But when it comes to adults, we rarely differentiate between a thirty-year-old and a fifty-year-old - even though with healthy development, one should actually be more selfless at fifty than at thirty.

Selfless behavior does not necessarily mean being selfless

Many social activities still satisfy our own needs: we seek positive feedback, recognition, appreciation, want to avoid loneliness, or wish to be part of a community.

Being socially engaged, therefore, does not necessarily mean one is selfless.

That's why we must always reflect on and question our motivation..

The problematic effects of this distinction in certain psychodynamics

There is one exception where trying to become more selfless is not helpful.

Some people take on too much responsibility too early during the socialization process within their family - like when a child begins to emotionally care for a parent out of fear that the family might fall apart.

This can lead to an unhealthy orientation toward others. In such cases, we become highly attuned to what others need, while losing touch with ourselves.

But this is not healthy altruism - it remains part of the ego.

This must not be confused.

People with such a psychodynamic pattern must first learn to feel themselves and reconnect with their own inner being before they can truly find God.

In these cases, the conscious effort to become more selfless would only reinforce the existing psychological structure, rather than foster true spiritual growth.

According to the Divine Principle, the original mind also cares for itself to some extent

The Divine Principle also makes it clear that the purpose of the whole fundamentally includes the purpose of the individual.

To a certain degree, the focus on self-preservation and vitality is part of our original nature.

Even here, the goal of the religious path is to become a selfless being. The original mind is revived and liberated from the fallen nature, so that it becomes the primary motivation of our existence.

Conclusion

When we look more closely, it becomes clear: the categorization into egoism and selflessness can easily lead to misunderstandings.

These categories invite premature judgments and can lead to poor decisions in our inner process.

Especially in the delicate process of self-knowledge, they often distort the view, block access to a deeper examination and thus hinder genuine self-knowledge.

This categorization serves merely as a rough orientation.

It is indisputable that true spiritual growth brings about selfless individuals.

But not every perspective can reliably guide us through this inner process.

A perspective that supports the path to selflessness

On my own spiritual path, the search for my selfless true self helped me more than any external evaluation of my behavior.

At our core, we are selfless beings. This innermost essence simply needs to be awakened and freed from the superficially self-centered ego.

This path leads us through an inner process of searching, in which we recognize and gradually let go of our ego-identification.

The result is a natural transformation towards selflessness – through the liberation of our selfless innermost being.

In what follows, I would like to describe more precisely the perspective that helped me on my path - and the inner transformation that came with it.

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