

“Look into the depths of your own soul and learn first to know yourself, then you will understand why this illness was bound to come upon you and perhaps you will thenceforth avoid falling ill.” (Freud)

In my life I've felt so misunderstood at times. I've also been completely wrong about other people. I strive to be as self-aware as possible, and to also be as understanding of others as possible. In my experiences I have realized that what you see people as on the outside can be so different from what they are actually like on the inside. Everybody has pain and problems and thoughts and feelings that nobody knows about. I want to study the difference between someone from the outside versus the inside along with the Id, Ego, and Superego. The Id, the Ego, and the Superego are all levels of our personalities, and, from the outside, people can't see what goes on in these three levels inside our brains. These two ideas fit together well.

The ego is the organized, realistic part of a personality. It switches between the desires of the id and the superego (Id, Ego and Super-ego). David Richo, Ph.D, is an author, teacher, and psychotherapist who wrote the book The Power of Coincidence. Richo writes that the ego comes from the Latin word for “I,” and refers to a rational and conscious center and side of life (Richo). Osho Rajneesh was a man who taught a belief system that included aspects of Hinduism, Jainism, Zen Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Greek philosophies, and other religions (Osho). He writes in Beyond the Frontier of the Mind, that the first thing an infant becomes aware of when they are born is of the “other,” not of the self. This happens because senses open outward (Rajneesh). Once a person feels appreciated, a “center” is born. This center is reflected and is not a real being (Rajneesh). This means that it's a reflection of what others think of him. It is the ego. He doesn't know who or what he is, because he just entered the world. He only knows of others. He knows his mother's touch and face, his father's appreciation (Rajneesh). It is very interesting that the first thing we are aware of are others. We live our whole lives prioritizing ourselves. Even a person who is considered “selfless” may only be acting this way because of the way it makes them feel. Therefore, they are doing it for themselves.

Everyone needs a center, but most are totally unaware of it. Society gives everyone a center and though one may believe the ego given to him by society is his Self, it isn't; it is a false one (Rajneesh). Imagine the ego is a plastic flower. We are satisfied with this because it never dies; it is permanent, safe. But the only reason for this is that it was never alive to begin with (Rajneesh). The true Self or “center” is a real flower. It is eternal, but not permanent; it dies, but is born again and again. The flower is dead, but the cycle never ends, it just changes form (Rajneesh). Its form begins as a seed, then grows into a flower. Then it dies and its seed falls and becomes a new flower. This is how the cycle never ends, but is just altered.

Though the ego is considered bad, or even evil, it is impossible to be rid of it (Rajneesh). It is important to recognize it. People make the mistake of trying to be humble and thinking that they have more awareness and less of an ego because of this. But humble people are the subtlest egoists. They are proud of their humility and expect to be appreciated for it (Rajneesh). However, this isn't being truly humble. A truly humble person doesn't think of themselves as humble or modest.

The super ego plays the critical and moralizing role in one's personality (Id, Ego and Superego). It is the last component of one's personality to form (Cherry). It presents itself around the age of five. The morals we learn from our parents and the ideas of “right” and “wrong” acquired from society contribute to the formation of the super ego (Cherry), so it comes from outside of us. The superego has two parts. The conscience and the “ego ideal.” The conscience

consists of behaviors we consider bad. The ego ideal consists of all we know about how to behave well. Whenever we do something good we feel proud, and when we do something our conscience thinks is bad, we experience guilt (Cherry). Without the superego, we wouldn't feel anything after doing something wrong. We can infer that we wouldn't have remorse. The superego balances out the ego and the id. It does this because it basically censors all the immoral things the id wants us to do (Cherry). It keeps us from behaving animalistically or acting directly upon our instinctual urges. For the ego, the superego attempts to force it to act morally as opposed to realistically (Cherry). So, it protects us socially by making us want to protect others' feelings and do what's best for society, as opposed to always being solely practical, realistic, and honest.

The superego is why humans sometimes feel guilty without being aware of a cause (Cherry). This is because the superego exists in all three levels of consciousness. When the superego does its job in the conscious mind, we know why we are feeling what we are feeling (Cherry). However, sometimes it acts subconsciously to assist us in suppressing the urges of the id. This causes us to possibly end up with a feeling of guilt and no idea why we feel this way (Cherry).

It makes sense that the super ego is the final addition to one's personality, as it is the weight that balances out everything else for a person. It is the final reason we are able to coexist and interact daily. Without the superego humans would be chaos. People would be acting on their id and doing immoral and insane things. Or, they would be acting on their ego and not considering others whatsoever.

The id is the disorganized part of the personality, and it contains a human's basic and instinctual drives. It is present from birth and is the source of our desires, needs, and instincts. It operates according to the force that motivates the instinct to look for immediate gratification, or the pleasure principle (Id, Ego and Super-ego). The pleasure principle tells us to eat when we are hungry and drink when we are thirsty (Cherry). The id also is the force behind each person's personality. It strives to fill urges that are mostly related to survival and also provides us with the energy to have a personality (Cherry). Without the id we wouldn't have anything to us. The energy it gives us makes us different from others. It seeks to escape pain. It is the simplest, most animalistic part of a personality. It makes sense that infants are ruled entirely by this force, the id. As an infant, all you need is to satisfy your hunger, thirst, and desire for comfort (Cherry). It also makes sense that as we age we develop the other parts of the personality that balance out the id. It would be problematic if we could not control the simplest of urges. It would be completely socially unacceptable for an adult to act solely on their id.

Sigmund Freud states it is the, "dark, inaccessible part of our personality..." and that it "has no organization" (Id, Ego and Super-ego). He also creates the analogy to compare the ego and the id to a rider and his horse. He says the horse is the locomotor energy and the rider determines the goal and guides the movements of the horse. The relationship between the ego and the id is, too often, less than ideal because the horse sometimes is too in control of the rider.

It may seem like the id can be very problematic but without it we would have no way to survive. It's the reason we do things to keep us alive. If we didn't have our id, we can infer that humans wouldn't reproduce, eat, drink, or do anything that nature has wired us to want to do. Since our id contains all our impulses and actions that evolution has hard wired us to do, without it we wouldn't continue as a species. For example, although people believe they have intercourse for their own personal reasons, the true reason is because human purpose is to reproduce. Without our id, we wouldn't care to do this.

It is evident that these three levels of human personality are all required to form a sane, functioning person. Studying each side - the id, the ego, and the superego - is very important, as it truly gives a richer understanding of oneself. Knowing at least the basics of this topic could improve a person greatly, especially in the teen years. Most teens are struggling to find who they are and to understand themselves in a deeper and clearer way. Knowing why they feel certain things and knowing which part of them is making them feel a certain way could be beneficial. For instance, knowing that the ego is most likely the main cause of someone feeling inferior, and that one should not listen to the ego, could really help someone's confidence. The knowledge of the three levels of consciousness could change a lot in the way a person, especially a young person, views themselves. Learning about the levels of my personality through this research has helped me a lot. I can make sense of my feelings. I know that my ego hurts me and that others are hurt by their egos too. Some are more in control of it than others and I have to be understanding.

One may wonder what the significance of all of this is to me. Well, the first time I became really interested in learning about the Id in particular, I was in English class. We read The Tempest and my teacher played the movie, Forbidden Planet, which she said was indirectly inspired by the Shakespeare play. In The Tempest, Prospero, his daughter Miranda, a nymph named Ariel, and a barbaric man named Caliban inhabit a deserted island. Ariel, under the instruction of Prospero, used his powers to make a ship crash on the shore of the island. The play is about how Prospero tries to get revenge on the people aboard the ship. In the end he overcomes his arrogance and selfishness. Barbara Lupack, the author of "Nineteenth Century at the Movies," says Forbidden Planet is about a group of astronauts who land on a planet in the year 2200 A.D (Lupack). The planet is currently inhabited by Dr. Morbius and his daughter - survivors of a ship that crashed twenty years earlier. It was previously inhabited by a species of superhuman aliens called Krells. The Krells built huge underground powerhouses containing machines and mechanisms unfathomable to these astronauts from Earth. Dr. Morbius shows the astronauts a machine that makes real things materialize out of nothing. The Krell invented this thousands of years before man even existed, so it is evident they are intellectually superior to any beings on Earth (Kehr). Strange accidents start happening on the planet that even result in a few deaths, and it becomes clear something inhuman is attacking them. At the end we find out that Dr. Morbius has accidentally materialized an invisible monster from his Id, by way of the machine invented by the Krells.

This machine essentially represents the limitless power of man, especially in the eyes of Morbius. Morbius (who represents Shakespeare's Prospero) wants to keep this power for himself, and wants to be the one to decide when to tell the rest of humanity of the things he's found on this planet (Lupack). Morbius finally realizes the Krell are gone because they forgot about their subconscious minds while materializing items using that machine. The Krell accidentally filled up the planet with their own invisible monsters. The monster Morbius accidentally creates represents Shakespeare's Caliban. This movie shows that humans will never be able to control this side of themselves (their Id).

At the end of this movie I researched the Id more. I read simple explanations of it, but was very interested by it. Then, my godsisiter began attending a school for spiritual psychology and started learning about the ego. Whenever she would give me advice about something, it always had to do with the ego. I learned a lot about it from her, and we both think it's really intriguing.

The Id, Ego, and Superego are functions of the psychic apparatus which make up a person's personality. People are very quick to judge someone without knowing their personality, and even when they think they know it, it's impossible for them to see inside their thoughts. Even the person themselves can't consciously recognize everything about their personalities. I now find it easier to understand myself and others.

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