

∞ 114. The Myth of Narcissus ∞

In the ancient Greek myth, Narcissus is absorbed in an image—but he does not even notice that it is an image in a mirror. The key to understanding “Narcissus” (or the ego-“I”) is not that the “self”-image is an image of oneself. Rather, the key to understanding “Narcissus” (or the ego-“I”) is that the “self”-image is an image reflected in and by a mirror.”

"This myth, this controlling logic or force that forms my very consciousness revealed itself as the concept and actual life of Narcissus. I saw that my entire adventure of the whole desperate cycle of awareness and its decrease, of truly conscious being and its gradual covering and the whole mechanics of living, seeking, dying and suffering was produced out of the image or mentality that appears hidden in the ancient myth of Narcissus. It was the logic or process of separation itself, of enclosure and immunity. It manifested as fear and identity memory and experience. It informed every function of being, every event. It created every mystery. It was the structure of every imbecile link in the history of our suffering. I began to see that same logic operative in all other men and every living thing, even the very life of the cells, and the energy's that surround every living entity or process. And I saw that the adventure or destiny of Narcissus was also my own, because I saw that I was living; this principle, I was living as this activity, this entity. And I gathered from examining the archetype as it appeared in literature in the form of Narcissus what must be the end phenomenon of such a life, and what is it always? What is the result of this contraction, this self obsession? It is death."

"The archetype of Narcissus, who avoids the world by gazing into a pond at his own image, is a metaphor for the ego, the independent self-mind. Like the pond, the mind is a reflective mechanism. Therefore, the ego or the self or Narcissus is a reflection, an illusion of independence. To enter into the realm of the mind, to persist in our flight toward subjectivity, our obsessive experience of separate self, is to be possessed of the self, not of God, no matter how profound the inward phenomena may seem to be at any time."

"Narcissus appears in the form of self-involvement, ego, or individuation. But in fact he is self-doubt. This is his origin, as it appears to understanding. To himself, Narcissus appears as aggressive self-enforcement and survival by stealth. He is his own disease. He dies as a function of his own drama and nature."

"You are “Narcissus”. You are looking at an image, and you think the image is actually “there”—as something outside you, as something that has nothing to do with you, except that you are seeing it as an “object”. As “Narcissus”, you are controlled by that “known-object”. You have already taken up the ego-position—and, from that position, you even regard Me as a “known-object”, “digitalizing” Me into the checkerboard that extends from your little block of presumption.

The ego, or the essence of every person (personified as "I"), is not an inner entity or subtle essence. The ego is the activity of self-contraction. And it is observable in the person of the "I," the body-mind or psycho-physical persona, as the feeling of separateness and the performance of every kind of separative activity.

"The true psycho-physical "root" or "center" of the human body-mind is the entire body-mind itself, rather than some center within the body-mind. Thus, the reactive contraction that separates the body-mind from the All-Pervading Life is the reactive contraction of the entire body-mind, which curls upon itself in every part, toward self-possession and problematic commitment to the survival and fulfillment of the independent sense of a "seperate self."

However, the characteristic signs of that self-defining reaction to Life in the case of the usual individual may be read in a specific organ and function complex. Thus, the usual individual displays chronic psycho-physical tension at the perineum, anus, genitals, navel, solar plexus, heart, lungs, throat, mouth, face, spinal line, and brain.

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The bodily "base" or "floor," which includes the anus, perineum, and sex organs, is the common functional "lock" that separates the individual or whole body from the foundation that is Life. Likewise, the bodily "ceiling," which tends to be created by reactive "locks" or chronic tensions at the mouth and the visual, verbal, and speech centers of the brain, creates a continuous and unpassable barrier to aspiration and intelligence. All the rest of the body-mind composes the "four walls" of self-enclosure.

Only when the "door" or "window" of the heart awakens the whole and entire body-mind in the intuition and spontaneous love of Life, or the Divine Ignorance-Radiance, does this house and hedge of Narcissus dissolve in the ecstatic Regeneration of Happiness."