

## July August 2008 - Discerning Ego vs. True Self; of Mind vs. Heart

By Dave Markowitz

In the last issue, we had an intimate opportunity to meet and embrace our new best friend, Edward Godfreid Oppenwalshenheimerbergenstein, also known as EGO. We said that Edward is to be understood and accepted, not hated, as the latter only re-feeds his seemingly insatiable appetite to drive us crazy. The Edster is simply the built-in opponent that makes sure we're not just given all the things we say we want without a challenge. This is to assure that we have a deeper, more meaningful purpose and a true and rewarding sense of accomplishment when we attain/experience those things we say we want. The article described why Eddie exists in more detail, and how he got there to begin with! And if you haven't read it yet, I strongly suggest that you do. So much will become clearer to you and life will be less of an effort and more of a joy, for if effort is enjoyable, there's really not much effort at all. And if you don't go back and read it, I invite you to see that the true you most likely wants to, but your ego is telling you not to. Who's gonna win?

Great, now that you've done that, we can move on. And for those that continued reading, yes, I know who you are, you can stop beating yourself up for not doing so; that's just another trick of your inner Edward looking to get the best of you. This month we're going to show you what ego gone awry is capable of. We have the very best demonstration of it for the entire world to see. And we've had that for the last seven and a half years. If we don't take the time and make the effort to understand and learn from the bigger picture right here and now, the results won't be pretty.

We define ego as the desire to receive for the self alone. And sometimes for our self and a few of our closest friends and acquaintances, who, most likely are so caught up in the same self-aggrandizing energy that they willingly give you what you want, no matter who else is affected and how. As the "fortunate son" of George H.W. Bush, our current president didn't face the same external challenges that you and I have, but he did have to face his inner Eduardo just like each of us. As someone growing up with incredibly low self-esteem without the wisdom to see why nor the desire to know why and what to do about it, he can be seen as the epitome of ego gone awry. And the poster child for what we as a people need to face in order to survive.

You wouldn't yell at someone who has cancer for having cancer. Ego isn't much different; it is a cancer where the self proliferation at any and all costs is the only goal. Bush's inner Edward got what it needed in the past; he was known to be a lady's man and later indulged in alcohol and cocaine abuse. Because he kicked those habits without facing the true underlying cause, Edward sought more of the same energy, proliferation of itself, later on in even more diabolical ways. Numerous failed businesses only reinforced the insecurities that manifested as arrogance, and then still seeking fulfillment it then drove him to politics. Currently it is getting its fix through power granted (and then abused, as it often is), by the highest position in the land. Not "power with", but "power over".

As more of us let it be known that we disagreed with his policies and agenda--the one year anniversary of the Iraq war drew more total and worldwide protestors on any given day in our history--his inner Edward received exactly what it wanted, even more energy. The more we protested, the more adamant and arrogant he became. As approval ratings dropped faster than the bombs he authorized using, his inner Edward directed him to believe he was doing the right thing. Right of course being relative, it in this case was for he and his cronies as their net worth skyrocketed with their own ties to enormous companies making enormous profits off of the enormous suffering of Iraqis and American troops and their families. Perhaps the only thing more tragic than this is that it's served to unite others against America. Like preaching abstinence to teenagers with natural raging hormones, it's created the exact opposite of what was planned. Young Iraqi children now left despondent and hopeless due to our efforts may spend the rest of their lives plotting and maybe even acting out against Americans.

Hating and maybe even yelling at cancer cells or at the president--even if it's at your television screen when he's on--isn't the answer. You wouldn't get angry at a child acting out his rage, and if you did, at some level you know that doing so and acting on it are quite different. Likewise, raging at the President isn't going to be of any use. If you believe in the rules of Karma, he'll get what he deserves, although not by an outsider's judgment will it happen. As many of the soldiers and masterminds of the two World Wars have reincarnated into Rwanda, Darfur, and alike, their respective paths need to be honored. Because violence only begets more violence, it's time to alter that energy into something productive. Compassion for all on their path needs to be employed, and the sooner the better.

We need to truly get that Bush is not to blame, but more so the underlying causative energy of which we all have, ego. Blaming is not the answer either, it in fact only reproduces negative energies. Acceptance of what is, then acting upon that with love and compassion is the only answer. It always was and always will be. As he winds down his term leaving behind a trail of changed laws to protect himself and his cronies and a wake of almost incomprehensible destruction to our status as a nation and those within it and the rest of the world, it is our best hope that we can learn from this experience to never let it happen again. Indeed his presence at this critical time has been the catalyst for numerous peace movements and grass-roots organizations fixing the problems he and his administration were conveniently blind to, so there is a lot of good that's arisen.

To paraphrase Marianne Williamson, "Obama got my vote when he said, *'I don't want to just end the war, but I want to end the mindset that got us into war in the first place.'*" But because Senator Obama gets the underlying causes of things, it does not give any of us permission to sit back on our heels and watch him try to do the work for us. No one can do it all, but one person can be an inspiration for others. Each of us has a unique gift to serve the world. And serving others is the key to getting what you want. Which, ultimately and not coincidentally, is pretty much the same thing that everyone does--health, joy, and a sense of connection to each other and whatever higher power you believe in. The only real enemy is within each of us. It's time to give Edward what he deserves. Send him compassion as you would a small baby who cries for that sense of connection it had before birth.

When I hear people say, "Support our troops" I add, "coming home." And when people say "God bless America" I add on "and the President, terrorists, and each of us who lack the discernment of ego vs. true self, of mind vs. heart, and of dogma of separation vs. true connection and wholeness." Yeah, I know it's a mouthful, so oftentimes I abbreviate it to "and every sentient being." Same idea, less words, and it gives me more time to love my own inner Edward. Poor little guy is being shriveled up like fingers in a pool, but not without a fight! Sometimes I think of him as if he were my child and say, "Tell me why you're crying, my son. I know you're frightened, like everyone. Is it the thunder in the distance you fear? Will it help if I stay very near? I am here. And when you take my hand, my son, all will be well when the day is done."

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