

T4.III THE EGO¹ AND FALSE AUTONOMY

T4.III.24 You have asked lately how the mind could ever have made the ego. This is a perfectly reasonable question; in fact, the best question you could ask. There is, however, no point in giving an historical answer, because the past does not matter in human terms, and history would not exist if the same errors were not being repeated in the present. Abstract thought applies to knowledge², because knowledge is completely impersonal and examples are irrelevant to its understanding. Perception³, however, is always specific and therefore quite concrete.

¹ The **ego**: ¹⁾ It is the thought system that, "many millions of years ago," the Son falsely created by separating himself from the eternal Present of God's Oneness, in order, on his own, **to make and manage** time, space, and all that they have contained, contain, and will contain, until, "in a similarly long period, and perhaps even longer," time ends. ²⁾ About 300 thousand years ago, through his **self, the dreamer**, the separated Son gave some mammals—which we call "homo sapiens"—free will over their natural instinct and, **splitting himself**, he has been **incarnating himself** in each of the humans that have been, are and will be, **adding to their natural instinct, the specialness** that with reason, logic and common sense, their brain processes in their **wrong minds**, to try to survive as best and as long as possible. ³⁾ That incarnation of the separated Son in each body has been partial, since, so far, no one has remembered what happened in the separation, as no one has returned from death to tell his story. See T2.6 [106], T3.6, T4.3, T4.6, T10, LTe.12 (-L331).

² **Knowledge**, capitalized, **is** what all our **perfect and eternal Souls** know, fused into only One, in Christ, the only Son of God; Souls who, in perfect peace and joy, **are sharing with God His Love or Holy Spirit**, in the eternal Present of **His Oneness. Here**, when we think with the Holy Spirit, **knowledge**, in lower case: ¹⁾ is what we experience in **a holy instant of the real world**, having succeeded in totally forgiving another and fusing as One, his Soul with mine; ²⁾ **is knowing** that this experience is the **reflection** here of the eternal **Knowledge**. And **when we think with the ego's specialness**, it is what we can come to know in this world, according to its laws. See T3.5 [35] and [37], T25.4 [25].

³ **Perception: In the eternal Present of God's Oneness**—Which is where really, we all are perfect Souls, fused into only one Soul in Christ, the only Son of God, Who is One with His Father— **perception does not exist**, because Knowledge makes us know and experience that All is One and, therefore, there is nothing to perceive. **But in the separation**, when we think with ego's specialness, **perception is the fundamental process to survive through our reason, logic and common sense**, which the Course defines as "**Misperception**". And, when having decided to think with the Holy Spirit, we have accepted the Atonement for ourselves, forgiven and extended the miracles suggested to us by the Holy Spirit, our "**True Perception**" will gradually lead us to the **real world**—which is the goal of the Course— where, in our inner self, **we will experience the reflection here of the Oneness of God**, where there is only Love, peace and joy. See T3.4, T3.5, T10.7, T13, T14.6, [46], L134, M5.3.1, M19.5

T4.III.25 Each man⁴ makes one ego⁵ for himself, although it is subject to enormous variation because of its instability, and one for everyone he perceives, which is equally variable. Their interaction is a process which literally alters both, because they were not made either by or with the unalterable. It is particularly 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 presence. Thinking about another ego is as effective in changing relative perception as is physical interaction. There could be no better example of the fact that the ego is an idea, though not a reality-based thought.

T4.III.26 Your own present state is a good example of how the mind made the ego. You do have knowledge at times, but when you throw it away, it is as if you never had it. This willfulness is so apparent that one need only perceive it to see that it does happen. If it can occur that way in the present, why is it surprising that it occurred that way in the past? Psychology rests on the principle of the continuity of behavior. Surprise is a reasonable response to the unfamiliar but hardly to something that has occurred with such persistence. I am using your present state [as an example] of how the mind can work, provided you fully recognize that it need not work that way. Why are you surprised that something happened in the dim past when it is so clearly happening right now?

T4.III.27 You forget the love that animals have for their own offspring and the need they feel to protect them. This is because they regard them as part of themselves. No one disowns something he regards as a very real part of himself.

⁴ **Man** —the fragment of the separated Son of God incarnated in each human— believes that he lives in the *ego's reality*, in which: ¹) his senses perceive him to be *a transitory body*, endowed *with a brain*, with which he processes the supraconscious, conscious and subconscious impulses which come to him from two sources: ^{1.1}) One, from the *self*, the *dreamer*, with his *ego's general thought system* (laws of evolution and scarcity) and *his particular specialness*, both of which he processes in his *wrong mind*; and ^{1.2}) the other, the *Holy Spirit's thought system* (Altruism, miracle's impulses, Love) —God's Response to separation— which he processes in his *right mind*; and ²) in every situation, his thought has to decide which of these two minds and their respective thought systems he is going to choose. See T1.1 [15]-[22]-[27]-[44]-[52], T2.1, T24.8

⁵ The **ego**: ¹) It is the *thought system* that, "many millions of years ago," the Son miscreated when separating himself from the eternal Present of God's Oneness, in order, on his own, *to make and manage* time, space, and all that they have contained, contain, and will contain, until, "in a similarly long period, and perhaps even longer," time ends. ²) About 300 thousand years ago, through his *self*, the *dreamer*, the separated Son gave to some mammals —which we called "homo sapiens"— free will over their natural instinct and, *splitting himself*, he has been *incarnating himself* in each of the humans, *adding to their natural instinct, the specialness* which, through reason, logic and common sense, their brains processes in their *wrong minds*, to help them to survive as best and as long as possible. ³) *That incarnation* of the separated Son in each body *has been partial*, since, so far, no one has remembered what happened in the *separation*, as no one has returned from death to tell his story. See T2.6 [106], T3.6, T4.3, T4.6, T10, LTE.12 (-L331).

Man reacts to his ego much as God does to His Souls: with love, protection, and great charity. The reaction of man to the self he made is not at all surprising. In fact it duplicates in many ways how he will one day⁶ react to his real creations⁷, which are as timeless as he is. The question is not how man responds to his ego, but what he believes he⁸ is.

T4.III.28 Belief is an ego function, and as long as your origin is open to belief at all⁹, you are regarding it from an ego viewpoint. [That is why the Bible quotes me as saying “Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” Belief does apply to me, because I am the teacher of the ego.] When teaching is no longer necessary, you will merely know God. Belief that there is another way is the loftiest idea of which ego thinking is capable.

That is because it contains a hint of recognition that the ego is not the self¹⁰.

⁶ ... when he wakes up to Reality... **Reality**, capitalized, means the *infinite and eternal Oneness of God*, in Which, all of us, without exception—as Souls fused into One in Christ, His only Son—are One with Our Father, sharing with Him His Love, the Holy Spirit. Some of its synonyms are: Heaven, Eternity, Kingdom, Kingdom of Heaven, Universe. In lower case, **reality** means the *illusion of separation, the reality of time and space and all that they contain*, governed as they are by the laws of evolution and scarcity made by our *self, the dreamer*, the *reality in which we usually believe, perceive, think and act with the ego*. But *when we decide to think with the Holy Spirit*, and we study and apply the Course, we can transcend this reality in our inner self, entering the *real world*, which is the *reflection here of eternal Reality*. See T8.10, T11.4, T11.9, T18, T30.9

⁷ Being of Heaven, we think it should be capitalized: "**His** real **Creations**."

⁸ ... really... "**really**" refers in general to our true condition in **Heaven**, Which is *where we all really are* as perfect and eternal Souls, fused as One in Christ, the only Son of God, Who was never separated from His Father, with Whom He is eternally One.

⁹ **Wanting to believe**

The indispensable and fundamental awareness that the Course asks of you is: ¹⁾ *To be aware of the miraculous impulses* that from time to time emerge from your subconscious and, when you extend them to others in altruistic acts—which the Course calls miracles—they *bring to your life a meaning that is not usual for you*; ²⁾ Then, based on those experiences, to decide if they constitute an error of evolution (what you give, you lose) or, if their origin could be transcendent: ^{2a)} If they are evolutionary mistakes, you will derive your motivation to continue extending them from the ethics or altruism you would have chosen; ^{2b)} On the other hand, if *you want to believe* that they constitute here a *reflection of the eternal Love of God that floods our hearts*, then you will have no qualms in deducing and accepting the following fundamentals of the Course: ^{2b1)} That **God**—Whom no one has seen nor heard—exists, is perfect and eternal and, in His Thought of Love or Holy Spirit, *created us all*, without exception, in His Likeness, *not as bodies, but as perfect and eternal Souls, fused as One in Christ*, His only Son, with Whom He is One in the eternal Present of His Oneness; ^{2b2)} That in His Reality, *God created nothing else* and, therefore, There, the ego's reality that our senses perceive does not exist; ^{2b3)} That, as you forgive and extend more and more miracles, *this wanting to believe will become believing*, and will heal in your mind, all sorrow and pain, all fear and all loss, which it believed to be real, and which you suffered because of the loyalty you professed to them. See T6.6.3 [94], T7.5, T14, T23.2 [13], T29.8

¹⁰ ... True **Self** (we think it should be capitalized): **Myself** (capitalized), or **my Soul**, together with all other Souls fused as One in Christ, *is the only Son created by God in a Thought of Love or Holy Spirit*, One with Him in

Undermining the ego's thought system must be perceived as painful, even though this is anything but true. Babies scream in rage if you take away a knife or a scissors, even though they may well harm themselves if you do not. The speed-up has placed you in the same position.

T4.III.29 You are not prepared, and in this sense you are babies. You have no sense of real self-preservation¹¹ and are very likely to decide that you need precisely what would hurt you most. Whether you know it now or not, however, you have willed to cooperate in a concerted and very commendable effort¹² to become both harmless and helpful, two attributes which must go together. Your attitudes, even toward this, are necessarily conflicted, because all attitudes are ego-based. This will not last. Be patient awhile and remember that the outcome is as certain as God.

T4.III.30 Only those who have a real and lasting sense of abundance can be truly charitable. This is quite obvious when you consider the concepts involved. To the ego, to give anything implies that you will do without it. When you associate giving with sacrifice, then, you give only because you believe that you are somehow getting something better so that you can do without the thing you give. "Giving to get" is an inescapable law of the ego, which always evaluates itself in relation to other egos and is therefore continually preoccupied with the scarcity principle which gave rise to it. This is the meaning of Freud's "reality principle" since Freud thought of the ego as very weak and deprived, capable of functioning only as a thing in need.

T4.III.31 The "reality principle" of the ego is not real at all¹³. The ego is forced to

the eternal Present of His Oneness, in Which they profess that Love to Each Other in perfect harmony and joyful concord. In the Course, the word Self is also used only a few times as the Self of God. See T8.4 [20], T23, Lte.14 (-351)

¹¹ ... as Souls...

¹² The **holy relationship**, here: ¹) is the **reflection of God's Relationship of Love in peace and joy with all the perfect Souls that we really are**, fused as One in Christ, His only Son, in the eternal Present of His Oneness; ²) is the **source of salvation for the members of the special relationship**, for it is going to enable them to gradually move away from the specialness of their egos and to think and act more and more with their spirits or right minds; ³) **it is a process** that begins when two people who have totally forgiven another(others), **join their minds in a common goal in favor of another (others); this process flourishes and bears fruit** when **they extend to others the miracles that the Holy Spirit suggests to them**; ⁴) finally, when in holy instants in their inner selves, **two experience the real world**, there occurs in them, **at a deep subconscious level, a healing of the effects of thinking and acting with their egos**, causing them now, through the vision of Christ, to see everyone and everything with Love, in peace and joy . See T17.6, T22

¹³ Perhaps it is not, but bills HAVE to be paid...

perceive the “reality” of other egos because it cannot establish the¹⁴ reality of itself. In fact, its whole perception of other egos as real¹⁵ is only an attempt to convince itself that it is real.¹⁶ “Self esteem” in ego terms means nothing more than that the ego has deluded itself into accepting its¹⁷ reality and is therefore temporarily less predatory¹⁸. This “self esteem” is always vulnerable to stress, a term which actually refers to a condition in which the delusion of the ego’s reality is threatened. This produces either ego deflation or ego inflation, resulting in either withdrawal or attack.

T4.III.32 The ego literally lives by comparisons¹⁹. This means that equality is beyond its grasp and charity becomes impossible. The ego never gives out of abundance, because it was made as a substitute for it. That is why the concept of “getting” arose in the ego’s thought system. All appetites are “getting” mechanisms, representing the ego’s need to confirm itself. This is as true of bodily appetites as it is of the so-called “higher” ego needs. Bodily appetites are not physical in origin. The ego regards the body as its home and does try to satisfy itself through the body, but the idea that this is possible is a decision of the ego,

¹⁴ ... eternal

¹⁵ ... here, in time and space...

¹⁶ ... in the ego's reality, not in the Holy Spirit Reality; the eternal Present of Oneness... **Oneness**, capitalized, is, the idea that God, in the eternal Present of Heaven, is creating His only Son in a thought of Love or Holy Spirit, Love eternally professed to each other in perfect harmony and joyful concord. In lower case, here, in our right mind or spirit, **oneness** is the idea born of the natural longing to fuse all our Souls as One in Christ, the only Son of God, in an experience in our innermost being, which tells us that we are really not alone, isolated and separated from each other, nor helpless—as the perception of our bodies that the ego would have us see and believe—but that we really are the only Son of God. See T8.5 [38], T10.2 [15], T26.2

¹⁷ ... temporary

¹⁸ ... not necessarily

¹⁹ **Specialness**: ¹) is the **additional thought system** to the natural instinct one of evolution, which the **separated Son of God** or **I, the dreamer**, some 300 thousand years ago, endowed homo sapiens, to whom he had granted free will over his natural instinct; ²) is the way of **thinking of my wrong mind**, when **my brain processes** in addition to the existential impulses of evolution, the **egoic impulses** coming also from **myself, the dreamer**, which is what I do almost all the time; ³) is **my desire to be separated and above others**, trying to possess more and to be more than them, out of the conviction that I am worthy of the few good and transitory things the world has to offer; ⁴) is **to selfishly seek in special relationships**, the special love, friendship and appreciation they can offer, as well as to convince them to give up their equally special bodies and/or minds and/or possessions, which I consider I am lacking. ⁵) **But specialness can never love**, appreciate or share unselfishly, since, by itself, it constitutes a betrayal and an attack against the Love of God for each of our Souls—Which we all really are—fused as One in Christ, His only Son. ⁶) Consequently, **my specialness will be suspicious of everyone**, considering them as potential attackers or competitors, and therefore, it will not let slip any fault or sin they may commit; besides attacking those who interfere or oppose my self-interested designs. See T16.6, T24, T27.9 [82]-[83]

which is completely confused about what is really possible²⁰. This accounts for its erratic nature.

T4.III.33 The ego believes it is completely on its own, which is merely another way of describing how it originated²¹. 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. It is not free, however, to consider the validity of the premise itself, because this premise is its foundation. The ego is the belief of the mind that it is completely on its own. Its ceaseless attempts to gain the Soul's acknowledgment and thus to establish its own existence are utterly useless.

T4.III.34 The Soul in its knowledge is unaware of the ego. It does not attack it; it merely cannot conceive of it at all. While the ego is equally unaware of the Soul, it does perceive itself as rejected by "something" which is greater than itself. This is why self-esteem in ego terms must be a delusion. The creations²² of God do not create myths, although the creative efforts of man can turn to mythology. It can do so, however, only under one condition; what man then makes is no longer creative. Myths are entirely perceptions and are so ambiguous in form and so characteristically good and evil in nature that the most benevolent of them is not without fearful components, if only by innuendo.

²⁰ ... in the eternal Present of Oneness, Where we all really are as Souls fused as One in Christ, Who is One with God...

²¹ The myth of **separation** tells that, "Into Eternity, **Where All is One**, there crept a tiny mad idea" —the Son of God separating Himself from His Father in order to create on his own— "at which the Son of God remembered not to laugh at. In His forgetting did the thought become": ¹) "A serious idea" —**me**, the **dreamer**, the Son of God who managed to separate himself from Oneness— "possible of both accomplishment and real effects", such as the following deeds: ^{1.1}) We do not know **when the dreamer made time and space**, because about 14 billion years ago, he caused the cosmic explosion called "Big Bang" that destroyed everything he had made before; and also, he initiated the Universe (or Cosmos); ^{1.2}) about 4.5 billion years ago, he started to make the speck of cosmic dust that we call "world"; ^{1.3}) and about 300 thousand years ago, **he fragmented and incarnated Himself** (URTEXT T2F 39-40) in some mammals to which, by granting them free will to manipulate their natural instinct, he turned them into *homo sapiens*, **adding the specialness** to their minds, which their brains process through reason, logic and common sense in their now **wrong mind**. ²) At the very instant of the **separation**, God gave **His Answer** to it: the **Holy Spirit**, Who will send to *homo sapiens* **His system of thought** through **loving impulses**, which their brains will process in their **right minds** or **spirits**. which, when they take them into account, will invite them to accept the Atonement for themselves, to forgive and to extend miracles to the other(s). See: T1.1.28 [38], T2, T8.7, T24, T27.9 [82]

²² ... our Souls. We think that "creations", being of God, should be capitalized...

T4.III.35 Myths and magic²³ are closely associated in that myths are usually related to the ego origins and magic to the powers which the ego ascribes to itself. Every mythological system includes some account of “the creation” and associates this with its particular perception of magic. The “battle for survival” is nothing more than the ego’s struggle to preserve itself and its interpretation of its own beginning. This beginning is always associated with physical birth, because no one maintains that the ego existed before that point in time. The religiously ego-oriented believe that the Soul existed before and will continue to exist afterwards, after a temporary lapse in ego life. Some actually believe that the Soul will be punished for this lapse, even though in reality it could not possibly know anything about it²⁴.

T4.III.36 The term “salvation” does not apply to the Soul, which is not in danger and does not need to be salvaged. Salvation is nothing more than “right-mindedness,” which is not the One-Mindedness of the Soul, but which must be accomplished before the One-Mindedness can be restored²⁵. Right-mindedness

²³ **Magic**, according to the Course and when we think with the ego's specialness, is everything that we perceive through our senses and that we try to understand through our reason, logic and common sense. **But that reality must be unreal, simply because a God of Love could not have created it.** Indeed, the Course adds that God, in His Thought of Love or Holy Spirit, created only our perfect and eternal Souls, fused as One in Christ, His only Son. **He created nothing else.** Therefore, if we want to believe in a perfect and eternal God, we will also have to believe not only that **what we perceive here must be magic or illusion**, but that the Christ in the other we experience within during some holy instants in the real world, **is the reflection here of Our true and eternal Reality.** See T1.1.14 [14], T2.3 [62], T23.3 [30]

²⁴ **Soul** (or Spirit) —always capitalized— **is** our immaterial divine Nature that **God created similar to Himself**, with the understanding that, **being of God, the Soul is eternal and was never born.** The **Soul knows, loves and creates.** When the perfect and eternal **Souls** (or Spirits) —Which we all really are— **fuse into only one Soul in Christ, we are the only begotten Son of God**, One with His Father in the eternal Present of Oneness. Here, in the **real world**, when we speak of fusion of Souls, we refer to the fusion of the **reflection** of our Soul with the **reflection** of the Soul of the other, whom we have succeeded in totally forgiving her/him. Since **separation** happened, **nothing can reach the Soul from the ego, nor can anything from the Soul reinforce the ego or lessen the ego's inner conflict**, because the **Soul cannot perceive, and the ego is incapable of knowing.** Therefore, **they are not in communication and never will be.** See T2.2 [20], T4.2 [8] and [19], T31.6, L97

²⁵ **Salvation, is saving another**, because —being his Soul the same as yours— by saving his ego's wrong mind, you save yours as well. **Salvation is a process** that: ¹⁾ begins when you help another to become aware that, in addition to thinking "I", "me", "me", "I" with his survivor ego, he also possesses the alternative of thinking "us" in favor of another(others), as long as he pays attention to the miraculous (or loving) impulses that from time to time emerge from his subconscious. ²⁾ Then, thinking more and more **"we" —which is the Holy Spirit's thought system—** it will also lead him more and more to forgive the other(s) and to extend to her/him/them the miracles that the Holy Spirit will suggest to him. ³⁾ As these experiences multiply, he **will want to believe** that they represent here a **reflection of the eternal Love of God for His only Son** —Who we all really are, as all our Souls fused as One in Christ— and will heal in his mind —now right mind— all sorrow and pain, all fear and all loss, which he believed to be real, and which he suffered because of the loyalty he professed to them. See T6.6.3 [94], T7.5, T11, T14, T22, T23.2 [13], T29.8, T31, L39, LTe.2 (-L231)

dictates the next step automatically, because right perception is uniformly without attack, so that wrong-mindedness is obliterated. The ego cannot survive without judgment and is laid aside accordingly. The mind then has only one direction in which it can move. The direction which the mind will take is always automatic, because it cannot but be dictated by the thought system to which the mind adheres.

T4.III.37 Every thought system²⁶ has internal consistency, and this provides the basis for the continuity of behavior. However, this is a matter of reliability and not validity. “Reliable behavior” is a meaningful perception as far as ego thinking goes. However, “valid behavior” is an expression which is inherently contradictory, because validity is an end and behavior is a means. These cannot be combined logically, because when an end has been attained, the means for its attainment are no longer meaningful.

T4.III.38 A hypothesis is either false or true, to be accepted or rejected accordingly. If it is shown to be true, it becomes a fact, after which no one attempts to evaluate it unless its status as fact is questioned. Every idea to which the ego has accorded the status of fact is questionable, because facts are in the realm of knowledge.

T4.III.39 Confusing realms of discourse is a thinking error which philosophers have recognized for centuries. Psychologists are generally quite deficient in this respect, as are many theologians. Data from one realm of discourse do not mean anything in another, because they can be understood only within the thought system of which they are a part. That is why psychologists are concentrating increasingly on the ego in an attempt to unify their clearly unrelated data. It need hardly be said that an attempt to relate the unrelated cannot succeed.

²⁶ There are **only two thought systems**: ¹⁾ The **ego's thought system of our self, the dreamer**, which constantly sends to the universe in general, existential impulses that we also call laws of evolution (everything eats everything) and of scarcity (good things neither abound nor last); and, to our brains in particular, additional impulses of specialness that reach our conscious and the superficial levels of our subconscious, with which — processed by our brain in our wrong mind— our body will try to survive as long and as well as possible. We handle the impulses that reach our conscious with our reason, logic and common sense. ²⁾ The **Holy Spirit's thought system** —a reflection here of the Spirit or God's Thought, which is Love— which manifests itself to us mainly through the loving impulses that from time to time emerge from our subconscious and which, when processed by our brain, tell us, among other things, that we really are not the individual bodies, separate and competing against each other, that our senses perceive, but the Souls fused as One in Christ, the only Son of God, over there, in His Oneness' eternal Present. See T1.2 [102], T3.9 [72], T4.2 [8] and [11], T4.7 [85], T18.10

T4.III.40 The more recent ecological emphases are but another ingenious way of trying to impose order on chaos. We have already credited the ego with considerable ingenuity, though not with creativeness. It should, however, be remembered that inventiveness is really wasted effort, even in its most ingenious forms. We do not have to explain anything. This is why we need not trouble ourselves with inventiveness. The highly specific nature of invention is not worthy of the abstract creativity of God's creations.