



*IS MY 'EGO' MY
BODY?*

BY
E.M. CUMBER

Revised Edition
By L.N.Cumber For
Dr.E.M.Cumber's Foundation
QuaVcum Production



INTRODUCTION

The word ‘*EGO*’ when defined very simple, does not present any problem, but when the *INDIVIDUAL* stands out as a *UNIT OF EXISTENCE*, and starts talking of *HIS* ‘*EGO*’, meaning the *TOTALITY OF HIS BODY*, there is some uncertainty as to what the word *EGO* means.

The definition of *EGO IS* “the individual’s capacity to think, feel and act. This definition creates no problems, but when we have to look at it from the point that the *EGO* is an individual, and this individual is the man standing in front of us now, the word *EGO* should mean ‘*HIM*’ in its entirety and should be *ORIGINAL*.

Here there appears to be some divided opinion. Scientific discoveries have gone so far that it is possible for John to live a successful life with the organs of Peter. If John who calls himself ‘*I*’ i.e. ‘*EGO*’ agrees to have his organs removed, and replaced with organs from Peter, can John now call himself Peter or half John and half Peter?

The answer is NO. The sense of belonging the *EGO*, remains unchanged. The word *EGO* appears to be referring to the spirit and not the body. Let us take the case of a man who is brainwashed and hypnotised, and his name changed from *ALPHA* to *OMEGA*. When this man now talks of *I MY EGO*, is he referring to *ALPHA* or *OMEGA*? He is referring to the feelings of *WHO HE HAS BEEN* –himself and this feeling of himself has not changed at all. It is the feeling of himself, call it *ALPHA* or *OMEGA*, it makes no difference.

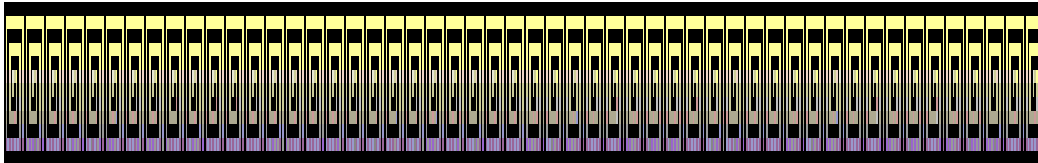
The short play that follows, is written to throw light on the issue,

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Listen to what *Peter* and *John* have to say!



PETER: John, I have been thinking for a while now about the word ‘*EGO*’. What do you mean when you talk of ‘*MY EGO*’?

JOHN: It is the individual’s perception or experience of himself. This is the basic dictionary translation. In some circles, it is held that the ‘*EGO*’ is the instrument for living in this world.

PETER: ‘*EGO*’ means *I* and *ME*, but my body is *I*, therefore *MY EGO* is ‘*MY BODY*’. What do you say about that John?

JOHN: (*Laughs*), Peter, this is a highly philosophical question. Biologically you may be right, but I look at it from an entirely different angle. I would beg to disagree that *MY EGO* is not my body. Why? You might wish to ask. Well let us take your body and cut off your hands and legs or render you paralyse. Your body is not 100% complete, but with all these cuttings, you don’t feel *LESS THAN YOURSELF*, and you will not say that you are half a man or ¼ man. The sense of ‘*I*’ remains complete.

PETER: Thank you very much John for that brilliant explanation. From that I gather that you mean that ‘*I*’ is not ‘*MY BODY*’, but then ‘*MY BRAIN*’ is *I* as I have always thought.

JOHN: Here again Peter, I would like to disagree. Your brain may be badly destroyed, and functioning very little, yet the sense of you as ‘*I*’ is complete. It is *WHOLE*. You are still ‘*I*’.

PETER: Some people say that the ‘*SENSES*’ are ‘*YOU*’. What do you say about that John?

JOHN: Like I explained earlier on, the *SENSES* may be lost but I am still ‘*I*’. To conclude all these, I have this to say since the separate parts of the body or part of the senses are not ‘*I*’ or ‘*MY EGO*’, then the *TOTALITY* of these parts (i.e the totals of the parts of the body), the brain, limbs, legs, eyes, lungs etc cannot be the ‘*EGO*’. The self is not the body alone, but if I may quote an authority of this subject “ *It is the conscious entity that which becomes one with the body when fully plunged into it at the time of creation*”. This explains what the *EGO* is.

PETER: But the one could say that “*HIS HEART*” constitute the “*I*”.

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JOHN: Here again I disagree. Modern scientific achievements have thrown a lot of worry on this issue. Let us transplant **A**'s heart onto **B**'s. **B** now exist with **A**'s heart in him. Would you tell me that **B** should now call himself **A**? No, not at all. He is still **B**. Now looking at my picture from childhood up till today, I have changed greatly, physically, but the senses that it is the same '*I*' or '*ME*' has not changed.

PETER: O.K Johnny, there is a topic we were discussing at the club the other day. A friend of ours decided to call someone mentally sick. Some people would say the *MAD MAN*. What do you have to say about these unfortunate people?

JOHN: Yes, the medical people call them *SCHIZOPHRENIC*. A slow insidious illness: *Schiz* = Broken, *Phrenos* = Soul or heart. So the mad man whatever that means to you, a man with a broken soul. To me the incident is different. His madness does not mean anything to him. It is you or we who see him in this pitiable situation. You think he lives in a kind of *VOID*, but perhaps not the kind of emptiness you are imagining- The **cosmic Void**. He lives in a void perhaps occupied by other people, strange objects, voices and visions. To me he is not a sick man. His life might be irradiated by lights from other worlds. The difference between you and him is that you live in this world, while he lives in both worlds- the inner and the outer world. His mind is geared towards the outer world while his body remains something of this world.

PETER: Johnny, I am afraid I don't seem to understand your comparison between me and him. But I too feel for him as you do. They say he is mad and terribly sick. He breaks no laws, he commits no crime, yet you and I don't like him. The laws of the state mean nothing to him, and he scarcely violates them. He is aggressive when you provoke him, but then this is man's normal reaction for self-defence. He has no regard for hygiene, and lives a careless life, eating whatever comes his way, or he comes by. He sleeps wherever he likes, and yet some of them look healthier than any of us. When it comes to child bearing the Lord Almighty does take care of her. During and after confinement and the innocent baby. They both are not half people. The fact is that the man is not one of us. He has broken down.

JOHN: Yes, Peter, it is this term broken down that I would like to talk about. He has not broken down. He has broken through, yes broken through into another world. His madness is a passport to this new world. It is held that when a man goes mad, his centre of experience moves from *EGO* to *SELF*, and that, only the external things mean anything to him. He is a confused man by our estimation, but this confusion means nothing to him. He makes no effort to get out of this confusion. For it is not part of his life.

THE AUTHOR'S CONCLUSION

These men are called '*CRAZIES*', but in the hospital are known as patients. But how do they live and how do they feel? Who wants to be like one of them, or who wants to feel like one of them? The answer obviously is *NO ONE*.

To prove you wrong, somebody decided to feel like these '*CRAZIES*' - *Sue Estroff*, a post doctoral fellow in Psychiatric anthropology at the Wisconsin



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University. She decided to spend sometime with mental patients. Some choose the very difficult patients, in fact those who were disinstitutionalized and were said to be a great risk to the community.

Her role was a difficult one, because she had to live with them, share nearly all their feelings, and at the same time maintaining a level head to be able to report back to the team of management. It is not only living together with them which is the problem, but the condition she had to put herself in, in order to adapt herself to this way of life. For instance she had to take very powerful anti-psychotic drugs, attend psychiatric clinics, and participate in group therapy, and it was recorded that at certain times she did experience all the miseries of madness, including moments of suicidal depressions. Surely this is not a nice thing to do to oneself, but in the name of research or experiment it had to be done.

She found herself obeying the norms laid down by these patients themselves. They had to be generous for he or she who had something nice. Had to share it with the others. This included money, cigarettes and food, considering the in hygienic conditions they came from. However she herself had to make some gestures, for instance she had to take them to the restaurant, and other places of entertainment, knowing well that such atmosphere provided grounds for her to learn about them. She spent two gruelling years with them, and she can remember very well one occasion, when she tried the drug **PROLIXIN** in order to experience the effect. It was a horrible experience, she had to abandon it immediately after six weeks or tremors, and she developed to a stage of “near suicidal despair “. From that experience, she had this to say. “ ***It’s the closest I ever got to being crazy, and the closest I want to get***”

“***Enough is enough***” this is what she had to say. Having gone through all these ordeals one would like to ask the following questions:

- 1) Why on earth should she try such a thing?
- 2) What are her experiences, and to what advantages?
- 3) What type of life would she live after all these experiences? Would she be able to re-adjust herself, and continue to live a normal life?
- 4) Would the experiences she had gathered not continue to be constant reminder of some abnormal life?



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