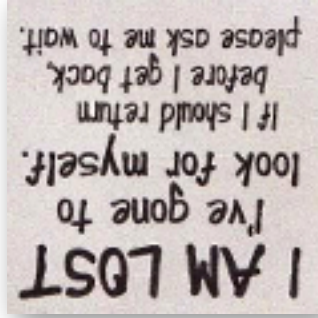


YESTERDAY, I DISCOVERED THAT I AM A CARTOON CHARACTER. I WAS UP ALL NIGHT TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER I AM THE LINES OR THE SPACES IN BETWEEN.



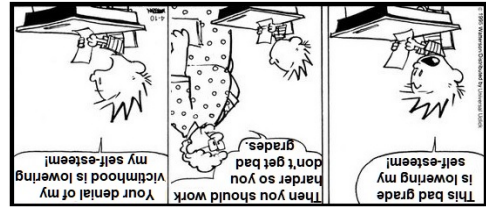
A myth in the culture is if you can transcend or bypass the ego. In truth, **the ego must be suffered awake, healed, and then** integrated into the whole self. Doing so, returns the ego to its initial position as **'part of a larger navigational system'**. The soul, spirit, ego, and heart are essentially your internal GPS.

Carl Jung described **the human shadow**, as the **mask we wear** to hide our perceived deformities. Many of us have yet to realize that it is impossible **in a psychological world of guilt and shame** to not become maladapted. Since adaptation is an ego function, it tends to remember and re-enact all of the negative things we've experienced as children. When Jung was asked if everyone has a shadow, his answer was perfect: *"Anyone who dares to stand in the light, cast a shadow."*



The formation of **ego happens** because of an outward need **to adapt and self-protect**. The harsher the adaptation, the more rigid ego becomes. These defenses carry heavy energetic weight, so much so that it seems to drown out the heart. For some of us, it takes awhile to realize this isn't true.

The things we obtain and accomplishments we achieve shore up our devotion to ego. Our external orientation and environment shapes us into 'who' we think we are. But, we are **left with the feeling that something is missing**. We have yet to realize it is US--we are missing! Our heart and soul are absent. The spiritually *unconscious* person experiences life as a victim, spinning in the daily demands of living.



The BIG Questions zine are tiny insights by author, psychologist, and wisdom teacher Ernie L. Vecchio. His career spans three decades of assisting thousands of individuals undergoing severe trauma and their evolving psychospiritual context for surviving adversity. These teachings offer everyone a balance between their outside reality and inner personal truths. The result is individual freedom and a healthy way to BE in the world.

# WHO

## Ego

**Ernie L. Vecchio**

Ego:

*The mediator between a person's inner (perception) and outer (adaptation) reality that attempts to form the values of right and wrong (moral), ultimately dictating that the central part of our innermost reality (heart) struggles to find a guiding philosophy (context) for what is true and false (ethic).*

*\*Read without the brackets*



Even though the soul precedes ego, we become lost in its influence. The **ego** records our personal history and **uses hindsight** to interpret its experience. Focused on the past and worried about the future, it is externally focused. The ego believes there is no self on the inside except I and me. Storing **our past** 'as if' this is who we are, it doesn't know **it's simply where we're from**.