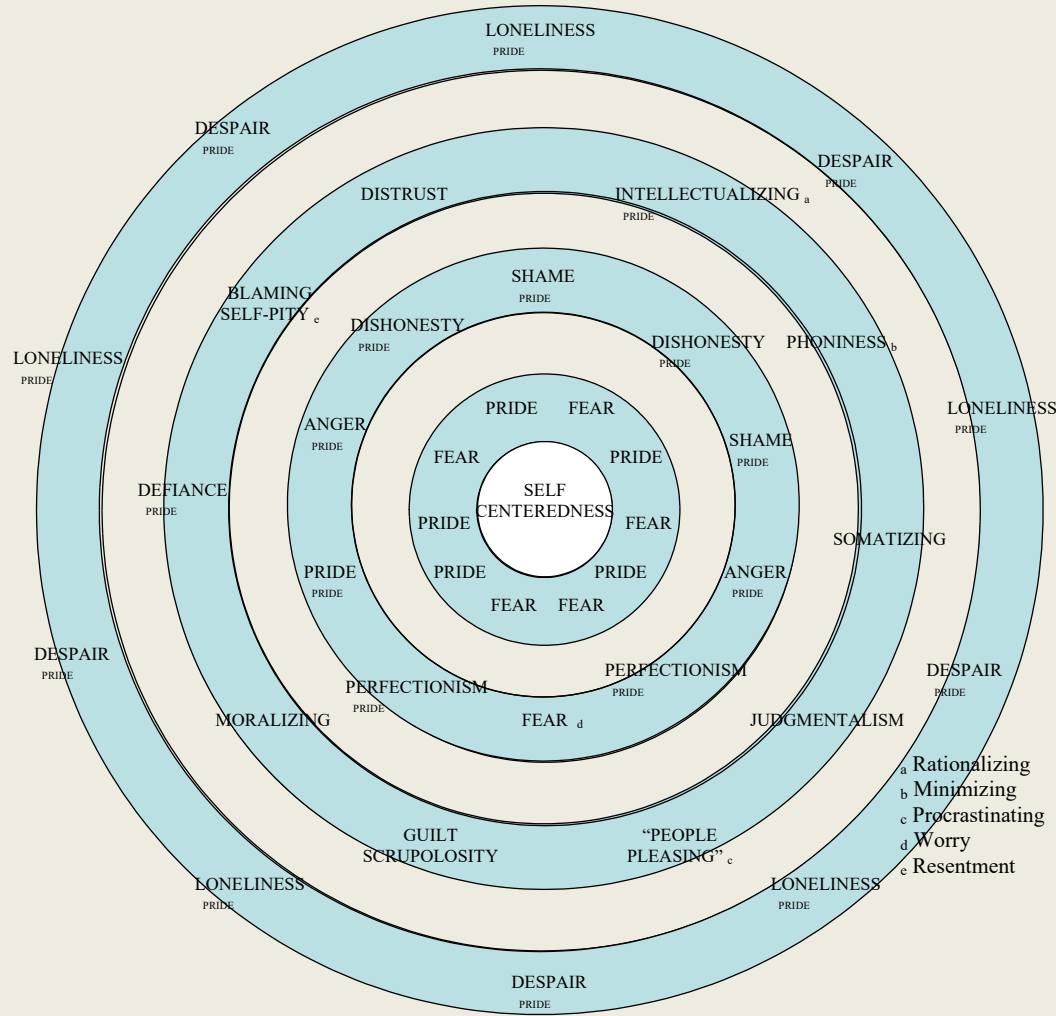


# The Self and the Ego

Marvin Gallaway, MA, CASAC

# The Self and the Ego

## The Ego: Behind the Walls



# The Self and the Ego

## The Egocentric Self

- The inadequate connection between Ego and Self is represented by the broken line.
- The extra thick line around the circle that represents the Ego symbolizes the egocentric Ego, which is isolated behind its defenses that are like thick walls around it.
- The Ego inside of these thick, rigid walls is unaware of the existence of the larger reality of the Self even though it is contained within.

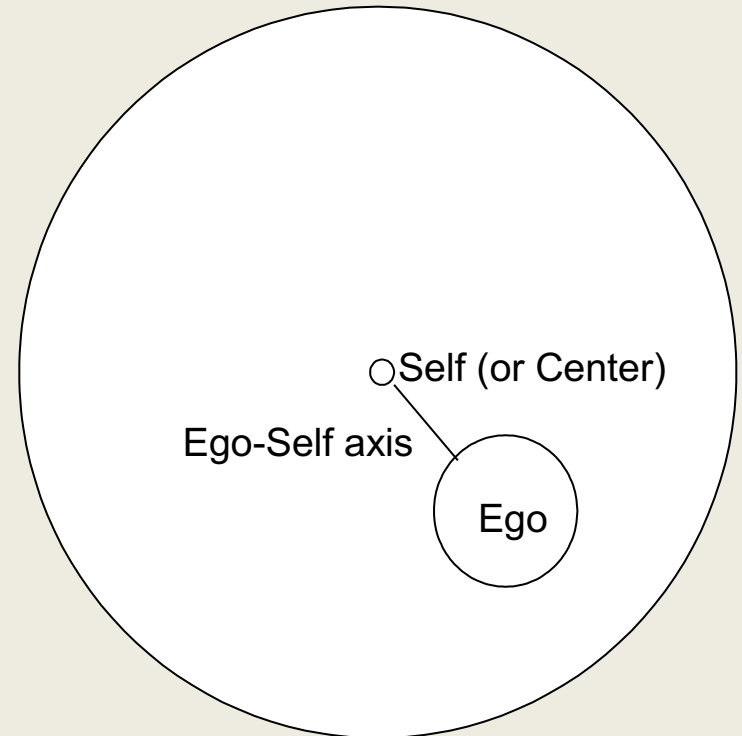


# The Self and the Ego

## The Ego-Self Axis

The Self can be represented by both the larger circle and its center (showing its paradoxical nature as circumference, whole and midpoint), and the Ego by the smaller circle.

- The Self is larger than the Ego, and the Ego is contained within the Self, and this is true even when the ego is unaware of the Self.
- The optimum relationship that can exist between Ego and Self is represented by the line connecting the small circle with the center of the large circle, called the Ego-Self axis (Edinger).
- When this connection exists between Ego and Self, the Ego is positively connected to the Self and experiences it as a creative will other than its own.
- Many methods are used in both religious disciplines and psychology to create and maintain this Ego-Self axis. Some of the more common ones are prayer, meditation and the analysis of dreams.



# The Self and the Ego

## Ego Types: Themes, Goals and Abysses

|         | <b>The Ego Type and Its “Theme”</b>                                | <b>The Goal</b>   | <b>The Abyss</b>   |
|---------|--|---|--|
| PASSIVE | <b>The Clinging Vine</b><br>Wants security and protection, warmth. | Absolute security granted and guaranteed by a reliable and mighty protector | Loss of protection; being forced to depend on one’s own resources                  |
|         | <b>The Turtle</b><br>Wants to be left alone                        | Absolute privacy and calmness; to be undisturbable                          | Loss of control; to be disturbed, to be touched, stirred up to emotional reactions |
| ACTIVE  | <b>The Star</b><br>Wants to be admired                             | Greatest popularity, recognition and applause                               | Loss of dignity and esteem; to be laughed at, despised, ridiculed                  |
|         | <b>The Nero</b><br>Wants power for power’s sake                    | Absolute power, blind obedience by and devotion from followers              | Loss of influence; not to be obeyed, or even to have to be obeyed                  |

# The Self and the Ego

## The Paradox of Self Transformation

He who would save his life must first lose it somehow. He must find himself in the *We*, in feeling relations to others.

- In any transforming event, there is always a loss of old egocentric values and a rebirth into living anew in the *We*.
- “The Dark Night of the Soul” represents not depression but the cataclysm of the ego crashing, the purging of the senses. *Only after the collapse of ego and complete loss of egocentricity can one find the spiritual path.*

| The Ego Type                    | The Abyss   | The Transformation of Self  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <b><i>The Star</i></b>          | Collapses from pedestal of admiration   | Finds a new and unsuspected richness of life in a quiet, inconspicuous routine as a teacher |
| <b><i>The Clinging Vine</i></b> | Deprived by the tragic death of her husband   | Becomes a creative, productive, independent person in rearing her family                    |
| <b><i>The Nero</i></b>          | Loses position of power and influence   | Does not dominate over, but becomes quietly useful to his fellow man                        |
| <b><i>The Turtle</i></b>        | Timidly retreating from world, dreading its terrifying demand, she is forced by adversity to make her own way | Becomes increasingly courageous, productive and happy                                       |

# The Self and the Ego

## The Myth: A Corollary of Human Behavior

*The system is supported and sustained by four myths*

1. THE SYSTEM IS THE ONLY THING THAT EXISTS.

The system defines itself as reality, and when someone lives out of another system, that person is said not to understand reality or not know how things are

2. THE SYSTEM IS INNATELY SUPERIOR.

Anyone who does not operate according to the system is, by definition, innately inferior. (Question: since the system is the only thing that exists (Myth #1) to what is it superior?) Since the system generates its own Rules, it need not be logically consistent.

3. THE SYSTEM KNOWS AND UNDERSTANDS EVERYTHING.

This myth defines what knowledge is and what is worth learning. It also defines large areas of knowledge out of existence.

4. IT IS POSSIBLE TO BE TOTALLY LOGICAL, RATIONAL AND OBJECTIVE.

If one believes it is possible to be logical, rational and objective then one ignores the ways one is not and uses only a small part of the brain and senses and ignores the existence of and devalues other thinking processes such as intuition.

*All four of these Myths can be summarized as:*

***THE ULTIMATE CONTROL***

End first night