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# **notes on the inner judge**

The Inner Judge, also known as Superego, is basically that part of our psychic structure which gives rules, moral barriers, behavioural codes and defines what is right and what is wrong.

Usually it has a quality of aggressiveness and /or manipulation and these are two basic ways to recognize when the superego is at work: there is a sense of inner aggression or inner manipulation.

The superego is basically the introjection of the "should" - "should not"s that are given to us by our parents.

While the baby starts forming his ego in the first years of his life, he comes in touch mainly with the mother and the father as regulators. The baby starts feeling that there are things that are allowed and appreciated by his parents and others that are rejected. For the baby, the most fundamental thing is the love of the parents. Like food - and even more than that - it is the most nurturing thing, so the baby starts being very responsive to all the subtle variations on the amount and the quality of love that he receives from them. Soon, in his openness, the baby starts feeling that the mother and the father - mainly the mother in the first years - change their attitude towards him depending on how he behaves. So the baby comes to know after a while what gets a response from mother and what doesn't. And of course when love is not given to him, this feels nearly like death: a deep sense of lack, loneliness and desperation opens up.

So the survival mechanism kicks in in that moment, the system goes on red-alert releasing the message, "if you want to survive, you need to do something."

*So the baby starts unconsciously cutting off certain parts of himself out of the need of survival.* For example, in the course of the process of charging and discharging of energy that everybody has, lets take a baby that is crying a lot. That is part of the normal process of discharging the energy.

He starts getting more and more messages from the mother that crying so much it is not okay, for she withdraws her energy, or gets tense and shrinks, or her tone of voice or look or touch become colder etc. The message is registered by the baby as a disappearing of love in its nurturing form. The baby starts suppressing the cry. In the beginning it's only suppression, it's not yet a repression. It is only suppression in the sense that it only concerns that manifestation of discharge of energy in the form of crying. And then slowly, slowly the whole content of that energy, the energy of crying and the feelings and emotions that got connected with it, are repressed, and they go down into the unconscious. He will grow up with this message inside himself that crying is not acceptable ( that mother will not be there). So he will keep this very specific form of his energy into the unconscious; not only that, but every time that in different circumstances this energy may start surfacing, a certain anxiety will be experienced in the ego. At that point, again red-alert happens and the superego comes in and says, "no, it is not okay to cry".

It is a totally unconscious process. Normally we find ourselves already in it, long after the superego has already come in, then we realize that something has happened.

*Usually we experience a sense of uneasiness, of guilt or shame, and a feeling of*

*contraction or tension in the body. Very often we go into shock or we go blank. We do not really understand what has happened and how we arrived where we are.*

Let's take another example: I meet somebody that I like. There is a surge in my energy that is connected with the expansion of pleasure, in liking somebody. I might experience it in my heart and in my sexual organs, in the rhythm of my breath and in the temperature of my skin. At that point a certain anxiety comes up from the unconscious. Let's say that I have a self-image that I am a shy person, then in that situation my superego might say " Well, you are a shy person, so if you put out your liking you will do it in a awkward way and you will be rejected." So the superego is basically saying, "you are not able to do this; you don't have what it takes; you are not good enough etc."

So what we start noticing is that every time we are in a situation where we are challenging the normal boundaries of our personality as we know it, the superego always comes in. The superego functions like the police, the national police on the borders - it is there to keep out anything that doesn't fit with a certain psychic structure and especially a certain image I have about myself. But even more than keeping the other out, it keeps me in, inside these boundaries. So every time I go beyond my boundaries, I will have to challenge or respond to an attack from the superego.

That's where the learning comes in.

The learning goes through very basic steps:

- The first one is to **recognize when the superego is attacking**, because most of the time we are not aware of it and we realize we are under attack only afterwards, usually when the blaming superego comes in and it is time to lick our wounds. So the first thing is to recognize when there is an attack happening *while it is happening*. This is the most difficult step. We are so used to have these voices inside constantly evaluating and judging and manipulating our experience, that it is very difficult to recognize, " okay, now this is my energy, this is my experience and this is what the superego is telling me."
- The second step is that once we have recognized the presence of the attack, we need **to identify with total clarity (which comes with practice) where it comes from, who is speaking** - is it mother or father, or may be grandmother or the older brother? Have it very clear that the voice (or if its not a voice could be a feeling, a sensation) it's not your voice, it's only the introjection of the voice that gave that specific input maybe 20 years or 40 years before, and you are still carrying that trauma in you. Once that voice is identified, then there are different ways to defend against an attack by the superego.
- And the third step is that **we learn to defend by non engaging and by using aggression against aggression**. What we do is that we use (life giving) aggression against the (life cutting) aggression of the superego. We just say things like, " Mama fuck off!" or "Enough! I don't want to take this shit" or " I don't care what you say" and revert our attention from the inner dialog to the energy and the feelings that have been attacked. We should never engage in a discussion with the superego because the superego doesn't work on a rational level, it works on an irrational level and anyway it is only a program that repeats

itself over and over. So if we discuss we are already caught in the loops of the mind!

Once we have developed the ability to disengage and to respond to this aggression with aggression - which in time helps the manifestation of "essential will" and "essential strength" - then slowly the superego will become less present. Then we will start dealing with it in different ways, which have more to do with witnessing, or with a sense of humor, or with compassion.

**This is a long-term process. It does not happen from one day to another.**

The reason why we want to do this work is not only because the superego rules - which have been created many, many years before by our parents - are still running our life, but even more because the superego has become that part which completely controls the growth of our ego. So we cannot really work with our ego and understand and evolve and eventually transcend it unless we have already worked with the superego. And that's the tricky point where we often get stuck and confused.

So the superego (Osho calls it "conscience" or "character") is the first step. At the same time it is a major step because when we deal with the superego and we learn how to defend against it, we basically start destroying all the boundaries. Let's remember that the superego is the part that holds the boundaries. And *when we start destroying the boundaries we start coming into contact with a completely different experience of space* - both inner space and outer space - to finally witness the disappearing of the primary boundary, our skin, and the separation between inside and outside, here and there, me and other. And when we are no longer inside this tight castle we start expanding in all directions simultaneously.

Silencing the superego has to do with the incredible experience of presence and space. It is like you start for the first time to notice that what is actually in this universe is much more, billions time more, space than objects. So when the boundaries fall, yes, there is insecurity, but there is also an incredible sense of, "Oh yes, I can breathe now!" During the process of disappearing of the superego starts manifesting what in the Sufi tradition is called the "diamond body" or the "body of knowing".

It's that natural intelligence that knows always, under any circumstances, what is right without any moral code of right and wrong.

The superego, as we said, is derived from the relationship with early authority figures (mainly parents). People that build a strong superego are usually people that have a well-defined personality, in the sense that the set of rules is very stable. So actually, in terms of survival, there is a positive aspect. For example, in people that have mental disorders, very often the superego is very weak. Because the defense against the attack from the parent when they were children was not built completely - resulting in a weak superego - they were totally overwhelmed.

*An individual will be able to live without a superego when the superego is transcended, not before the formation of the superego.* This protection mechanism is needed for basic survival.

Dealing with the superego will help us to remove probably the main obstacle to encountering our past and our growth. If you imagine - we can use this symbol - we are like a seed in our potential and the superego is like the skin of the seed. So the seed, to start growing, needs to break the skin. If the skin is not broken the seed will not grow.

The superego is that skin that tries to keep us exactly as we are - which means as we have been created by our parents and *the identification with it*. That's why we would need to break the skin and then the growth process can open. And of course, it is not easy and it is not painless. There are many monsters to encounter. And another important aspect is that most of our relating has to do with superego relating, and the disownment of our superego and projection of it on our, wife and husband, children, partners, friends, god, master, etc.

### **Quotes on the Superego**

Why can't we just accept ourselves and others just the way we are?

Because you have been conditioned to reject, not to accept. You have been conditioned to deny' you have been conditioned to say 'no'. You have not yet known how to say 'yes'. You have been conditioned to condemn. You were condemned and the same you are doing to others. You go on condemning yourself also, and the same you have to do with others. You cannot do otherwise.

Your parents were telling you, "You are wrong, this is not right, this should never be done," and a thousand and one times they have repeated it. And you have gathered one message: that you are not accepted as you are, you are not loved for your simple being.

If you fulfill their desires they love you; their love is a bargain. If you follow them like shadows, they appreciate, they approve. If you just become a little free and you try to be an individual, they are against you - their eyes, their behavior, everything changes. And every child is so helpless - just to survive he has to be political, he has to accept whatsoever the parents are saying...Your mind is a conditioned mind.

That's why you cannot accept yourself and you cannot accept others.

But the possibility exists. If you understand this - that this is just conditioning - you can drop out of it clean, right now! Don't get identified with it, that is the only way.

Don't think that this is you; just remember that this is society speaking through you.

Don't call it your conscience, it is not your conscience. It is a pseudo-conscience created by the society. It is a trick; it is a very dangerous trick. But the society has put inside you its own ideas and they function as your conscience. In fact they don't allow your real conscience to surface, they do not allow your own consciousness to come and take charge of your life.

Society is very political. Outside it has posted the policeman and the magistrate; inside it has posted the conscience. That is the inner policeman, the inner magistrate. And it is not even satisfied with this arrangement - above it has posted a god, the super-policeman, the head constable. So he is looking from there, even in your bathroom he is watching you. Somebody is following you continuously; you are never left alone to be yourself.

Drop this - this is your idea, you are clinging to it. It has been given to you by others. It has been given so early that you don't remember, but it is a political arrangement. It is not religious.

Religion is unconditioning. The very process of religion is to make you unconditioned, to free you of all conditions, and to allow you whatsoever you are meant to be, to allow your destiny.

**Osho, The Discipline of Transcendence, Vol. 1, #6**

*Osho, how can one develop a conscience - something within that will guide one in one's everyday life towards what is necessary for one's development?*

Steven,

There is no need to develop a conscience at all. What is needed is consciousness, not conscience. Conscience is a pseudo thing. Conscience is created in you by the society. It is a subtle method of slavery. The society teaches you what is right and what is wrong. And it starts teaching the child before the child is aware, before the child can decide on his own what is right and what is wrong, before the child is even conscious of what is happening to him, before the child is even awake....The child cannot make any distinction between what is real and what is unreal. And we start teaching the child what is right, what is wrong - we are conditioning him. We are conditioning him according to our ideas. All these ideas- from parents, from priests, teachers, politicians, saints - all these ideas jumble together inside him. They become his conscience.

And because of this conscience he will never be able to grow consciousness - because conscience is a pseudo consciousness. And if you are satisfied with that pseudo you will never even think of the real. It is very deceptive; the way we have been bringing up children is very deceptive. It is ugly, it is violent, it is against humanity.

That's why millions of people live without any consciousness. Before they could have grown into consciousness, we gave them pseudo toys to play with. And their whole lives they think this is all that is needed to live a good life. And their whole lives they will be rewarded if they follow the conscience, and they will be punished if they don't follow the conscience.

From the outside they will be punished and rewarded, and from the inside also. Whenever you do something that your conscience says is wrong, you feel guilty, you suffer, you feel inner pain. You are afraid, you are trembling...it creates anxiety. And the fear about heaven, that you may lose heaven, and the fear of hell, that you may fall into hell ... and with great inventiveness your saints have painted the joys of heaven and the miseries of hell.

This is conscience. Conscience is artificial, arbitrary. Conscience is needed because the society does not want you to be intelligent. Hence, rather than making you intelligent it gives you fixed rules of behavior: do this don't do that....There is no need, Steven, to develop a conscience. The need is to drop the conscience and develop consciousness. Drop all that you have been taught by others, and start living on your own and searching and seeking ....

Yes, in the beginning it will be difficult because you won't have any map. The map is contained by the conscience. You will have to move without map, you will have to

move into the uncharted, with no guidelines. Cowards cannot move without guidelines, cowards cannot move without maps. And when you move with maps and guidelines, you are not really entering into new territory, into new realms - you are going in circles. You go on moving into the known, you never take a jump into the unknown. It is only courage that can drop conscience.

Conscience means all the knowledge that you have. And consciousness means being empty, being utterly empty, and moving into life with that emptiness, seeing through that emptiness - then action has tremendous grace. And then whatsoever you do is right. It is not a question of what is right and what is wrong, because something that is right today may be wrong tomorrow. And borrowed knowledge never helps.

### **Osho, The fish in the Sea is not Thirsty, #11**

"The superego is in reality the most structured and most highly developed part of the psychic structure or ego. It becomes the inner regulating agency, containing one's adopted and developed moral codes and standards of being and action...The individual, in other words, learns to approve of in himself what his parents approved of, and to disapprove of what they disapproved of. What is disapproved of becomes mostly pushed out of consciousness, relegated to the unconscious; and so these defense mechanism are ultimately forms of repression...The ego relates to the superego just like the child related to the coercive agencies in his environment - afraid of its attacks." **A.H.Almaas "Work on the superego", p.3**

"As we saw earlier, this introjection of the coercive agencies (i.e. father, mother, etc.) is the only way that the child's ego finds to preserve itself and to avoid the wrath and suppression of the external coercive agencies. The ego does not need this inner coercive agency in the years of maturity, but it continues to act as if it does. No longer dependent on the parents, the ego, now being the structured part of the soul, really needs only knowledge in adulthood; but it keeps behaving as though the superego's rules and suppression are still necessary for survival...Our definition of the superego includes all influences in the mind that enforce compulsive patterns in the ego and that are based on any evaluation, whether of good or bad, high or low...The superego is that part of the person that maintain repression and fights any changes to the status quo...It is the tyrant king who maintains the status quo of conditioning" Ibid. P.5.

" So superego love is conditional and maintains the status quo. This is the kind of love that the majority of people are familiar with. It is a love that imprisons instead of setting free; it is a coercive agency. The love that sets us free, love that is unconditional, can only be experienced by someone who is free from the coercive influence of the superego...One good way to differentiate between the two kinds of love is to look at their consequences: one binds us and the other free us. We can see that one's capacity for unconditional love is proportional to one's freedom from the superego. Looking at this from a different perspective, for a person to love, she has to be able to be vulnerable. Vulnerability is difficult to tolerate if she cannot defend against the superego, because she will be vulnerable to its attacks. In fact, when she begins experiencing real love, she will encounter tremendous anxiety. This is because as a young child, she was alive and loving and was rejected, abandoned, or

punished; usually because her parents or the external world in general couldn't tolerate her state. So she associates experiencing love with a situation of danger"  
Ibid. P.9.