



Ego and the Illusion of Darkness, by Swami Nithyananda

Q: How can we surrender the ego, when this wanting to surrender is itself an expression of the ego?

Nithyananda: How are you going to surrender the ego, when it does not exist? Suppose you are sitting in a dark room. You want the darkness to disappear. But can you push it out? Can you fight darkness and force it to leave the room? No! No matter how long you keep trying, you are ultimately going to be defeated -- and that too by something which does not exist!

The ego is like darkness, it has no positive existence. Just like darkness is simply the absence of light, the ego is nothing but the absence of awareness. To struggle to kill the ego is like struggling to push the darkness out of the room. To really expel the darkness, what you need to do is to forget all about dealing with the darkness. Focus your energy on Light instead. Just bring a small lamp into the room, and you will find that the darkness has fled on its own! So, I tell you to forget all about the ego. Instead, focus on bringing a lamp of awareness into your being. When your entire consciousness has become a flame, you will find that the ego is no more.

The ego is an illusion. You cannot surrender it when you are unaware -- because you don't know how. Of course, you cannot surrender it when you become aware either -- because then you realize that there is nothing left to surrender! What you have heard, read, been taught -- 'Surrender the ego in order to attain Self-realization' -- this is an utterly nonsensical idea. It can happen only the other way around. Self-realization dawns, and suddenly you cannot find the ego anymore. The surrender has already happened, just like that.

However, I am glad that the question has arisen in your being. The ego is the root cause for all your anxieties, sorrows, tensions. [...] To actively feel that you want to drop the ego, to feel the need to be rid of this burden is itself a step towards awareness. It shows that you are stirring from your sleep!

--Swami Nithyananda