



Two Thought-Systems – One Choice

in each holy instant and in every relationship, am I ...

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| ... Hostage of the Ego? | ... Host to the Spirit? |
|--|--|
| Hate and Fear | Love and Hope |
| Separation | Oneness |
| Scarcity | Abundance |
| Time Bound | Timeless |
| Regret the Past, and Fear the Future | In the Eternal Now, the Holy Instant |
| Unhealthy Competition | Inspiration-filled Collaboration |
| Arrogance | Confidence |
| Grandiosity ("One of us is better than the other") | Grandeur ("We are both great") |
| Conflict (attack the other) | Confrontation (co-front issues in-the-between) |
| Judgment | Acceptance |
| Divisiveness | Healing |
| Condemnation | Mercy |
| Projecting | Extending |
| Force | Power |
| Make | Create |
| Secrets and Lies | Transparency and Honesty |
| Disaggregation | Integration |
| Hypocrisy | Integrity |
| Complexity | Simplicity |
| Drama | Peace |
| Analyze | Accept |
| Selfishness or Selflessness | Self-fullness (sacrificial selflessness is impossible) |
| Possessed | Enlightened |
| Duality, and Good vs. Evil | Non-Duality, Benevolence (evil is absence of love) |
| Monologue and Cross-Talk (fixing, arguing) | Entering Dialogue (healthy group dynamics) |
| Transactional | Relational |
| Superficial (fear of going deep) | Willingness to go deep (it is always good) |

Within each thought-system, is a way of thinking that is totally self-contained and completely rational. Within each thought-system everything makes sense and the world is understandable. When someone else is in the other thought-system, different than ours, they make no sense to us; it is therefore difficult for us to have [deep, authentic and empathic dialogue](#). However, dialogue *is* necessary in order to build bridges.

From the perspective of someone in the ego- or fear-based thought-system, someone in the spirit or love-based thought-system makes no sense, in fact that way of thinking and living will likely appear to be weak, dangerous and naïve.

From the perspective of someone in the spirit- or love-based thought system, someone in the ego- or fear-based thought-system also makes no sense. This quote from *A Course In Miracles* seems to capture this perspective; this may seem judgmental or it may actually be factual. It all depends upon your perspective. It all depends upon the thought-system you choose to live in.

*Ask not the sparrow how the eagle soars,
for those with little wings have not accepted for themselves
the power to share with you.*

I'm reminded of my experience with corporate executives. It seems like the cream and the scum rise to the top. Either thought system will work for you. The question is: What sort of life do you want to live? How do you define success?

Hostage of the ego or host to the spirit? – the table below illustrates how our chosen thought system makes itself evident. Look at how we respond to situations, how we manage information, how we deal with others, how we see life and our use of time.

Before we change our thoughts, we need to know what they are.

In each instant of time, are we ...

| Hostage of the Ego? | Host to the Spirit? |
|--|--|
| Situations | |
| Scarcity or zero-sum mindset – fixed resources – “your win is my loss” – we are “ <i>dividing a pie.</i> ” | Abundance mindset – limitless resources – “we create value” – we are “ <i>expanding a pie.</i> ” |
| In problematic situations: focus on judging & punishing – making someone <i>responsible</i> . | In problematic situations: focus on thoroughly understanding – then are we able to <i>respond</i> . |
| Information | |
| Secrets – <i>hoard</i> information to <i>keep</i> power. | Openness – <i>share</i> information to <i>create</i> power. |
| Complexity – <i>analyze</i> to great detail – lose sight of the forest for the trees – cloud simple truths. | Simplicity – uncover to <i>simple insights</i> – sees holistic trends – asks simple but tough questions. |
| Relationships | |
| Transactional – what am <i>I</i> going to <i>get</i> out of this relationship? Balance-of-trade is important. Life is all about <i>me</i> ; me <i>versus</i> the world. | Relational – what are <i>we</i> going to <i>create</i> together? If we both benefit, so will I. Life is all about <i>we</i> ; me <i>with</i> the world. |
| Either selfish or self-less ; both are focused on <i>separation</i> . | Focused on Self-fullness ; grandeur through our <i>oneness</i> and aligned intent. |
| Conflict – excessive competitiveness – alienates and distances self from others. | Confrontation – seeks solutions and growth – faces difficult issues – high rapport and high trust. |
| Grandiosity – I must prove <i>I</i> am superior. | Grandeur – you & I are grand; <i>we</i> are invincible. |
| Life | |
| A segregated life . Behavior <i>varies</i> based on specific areas of life (work, home, etc.). | An integrated life . <i>Consistency</i> of behavior across all areas of life. We work our love. |
| A pervading sense of separation . Separated from others. Separated from the spirit within. | A sense of connectedness or oneness of us all. At one with Self, connected with spirit. At peace. |
| Fear – fear of others, fear of failure and fear of success . A mundane state of <i>mediocrity</i> . | Love – love of life, love of others, love of Self and love of love. Fearlessly embrace <i>success</i> . |
| Time | |
| Obsessed with time – feels guilty about the past, fearful of future. Distracted (not present). Over-booked calendar and proud of it – “I am too busy.” | Timelessness – realizes that each instant is all we ever have. Focused on doing the “next right thing.” Presence interwoven with goals – vision. |

Note that the distinctions between ego and spirit, or between fear and love, are often subtle but significant (e.g., grandiosity vs. grandeur, or conflict vs. confrontation). The key issues are around separation vs. connectedness (i.e., oneness). What is our sense of peace within? What are our motives?