

“It's Not Personal, Really”

or *Beyond the Walls of the Individual and Collective Personality*

“Everything that has a beginning comes to an end.” Marcus Fabius Quintilian (35 CE -100 CE)

Marcus Quintilian was born about 600 years after the Buddha, but he came to the same conclusion as the Enlightened One. Buddha said it a little differently — that all forms pass — but the meaning is the same. Until recently, most people agreed with this, except they thought that the stars and the soul were eternal. Now we know that stars are born, live, and die just like the rest of us. Whether the soul is eternal is still debatable.

One answer is this: Souls exist — maybe in Heaven, hell, purgatory, the astral plane, or some other dimension, but in any case, they live somewhere in the universe. And the universe, having a beginning, will have an end. When that happens, everything within it will end too. That applies to souls and to God (if He has confined Himself to the universe, which is unlikely. Some religious traditions picture Him as such though).

This leads to an observation: if everything dies, then death is not personal. It is indiscriminate and impersonal. It is simply the end of a process, a process that begins at birth. Life, then, is like a length of string with birth at one end and death at the other. From this we can see that *life is not personal*. Just as death happens to everybody, so does life.

If life is impersonal, then everything is just happening. Nothing personal is taking place. Thoughts, feelings, planets, stars, and human bodies – they appear, unfold, and vanish, as if the universe was a magic theater, which in a way, it is.

The Ego and the Personal Life

Living personally is not a matter of how we act, but a state of mind, although that state directs our actions. The ego functions personally. This invites fear, disappointment, judgment, hate, and a host of other personality triggered emotions. It also provides doorways for negative astral influences to enter.

On the positive side, living personally is at once a luxury and an indulgence. We can feel triumphant, sensuous, elated, and a full range of sentiments. Once the thrill passes, though, we desire more and may slide into any number of negative feelings until the next fix arrives. The same applies to fame, wealth, and power, but we don't even have to lose them before we can feel empty. They don't equate to happiness.

Taking life personally is the ego dancing with Maya — a dance of shadows, unaware of their true nature. It's extremely difficult, maybe impossible, for the ego to fathom this, because the ego imagines itself as real. That is its nature. However, in reality it is at one with Maya and is an illusory identity.

Science has shed some light on our situation. String theory states that the universe is composed of incredibly small “strings” of light that cascade down from the tenth dimension. These sub-quantum light strings vibrate or “dance” and create the appearance of matter. Form, then, is dancing light, changing color, shape, and texture as time passes. The result is the momentary appearance of you and me and everything we see. We see light. We are light. Everything is light in *infinite variation*, one of God's favorite tools of creation. However, none of the forms, which compose this cosmic light show, are designed to last.

Implications of the Impersonal Life

Living impersonally is not a matter of how we act, but a state of mind. Our state of mind is in sync with our beliefs, and we base our actions on them. The impersonal life is the state of mind where life is not about us, or at least, not about who we commonly think we are. Life is simply happening. In this sense, knowing we (ego) don't really exist can be liberating. (If you're undergoing therapy, don't mention this to your therapist. If it slips out, be sure to add, "I don't exist, *at least as who I think I am.*")

This can bring up the idea of free will. Free will appears to exist at a certain level. That level is the level where time is a reality. You choose to do something, do it, then it's done: free will. At the level of reality where everything simply *is*, though, time does not exist.

When you live impersonally and embody love and compassion, you hover in a state of awareness untouched by the cosmic drama. You know that nothing can be outside the all-encompassing All-That-Is. It's like this: existentially, all humans – our brothers and sisters — are in the same boat; Spirit is the one Ocean on which the boat floats. And the Ocean is imagining the boat. And its passengers.

A Broader Scope

There's more. Old age, adulthood, and childhood aren't personal, and neither is birth. We are born by either chance or fate. Science believes chance is responsible of course, but fate is just as likely. If fate is responsible, then our birth was recorded the moment the universe was created. The universe develops according to innate patterns within its structure, analogous to how DNA works. These patterns, which we call the Laws of Nature, unfold over time and are a function of divine intelligence. So far, we haven't uncovered all those laws.

For example, a law of physio-spiritual evolution may exist: As a form evolves, so does its spiritual awareness. Inversely, as a form's spiritual awareness evolves, so does its form. Form and awareness can be synergistic, evolving one another.

At a broader level, this law would not just govern individual species (like homo sapiens), but would measure the progress of all the species on the planet collectively. Homo sapiens would not be viewed strictly in isolation but holistically. They would be the leading edge of the collective consciousness of all Earth creatures. The sum awareness of all the planetary species, then, would be the *manifest planetary consciousness* and would represent the conscious awareness of the planetary body.

This law would apply to any planet that produced life forms.

For humans, the next major step in awareness may be to evolve from a personal existence to an impersonal one. Instead of separation, we would know unity. Instead of fighting, we would cooperate with one another. The seeds of these possibilities are already planted in our collective unconscious and are sprouting.

Conclusion

While many levels of understanding exist about what the impersonal life means, at a spiritual level everything is impersonal. It's all just happening. Behind this impersonal dance of form – the magnificent wonder of Creation – lies the essence of life itself. It is a Self of joy, love, and peace, which, unlike this story, has no beginning or end.