



Get real by integrating ego and soul

Bởi:

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“The wonderful thing about letting go of the fear of failure is that it liberates us to try new experiences and new relationships. Once you know in your heart that Real inventiveness, creativity and even love are impossible without the lessons we learn from failure, you feel more courageous about making an effort.”

Toni Raiten-D’Antonio: *The Velveteen Principles: A Guide to Becoming Real, Hidden Wisdom from a Children’s Classic*

The Yin and Yang of Ego and Soul

For thousands of years, philosophers have written about how we humans are torn by conflicting inner drives. We want to be recognized, but we want to be left alone. We want material possessions, but we want our lives to be uncomplicated. We want to work hard at work that really matters, but we want to spend time sitting on a riverbank with a fishing pole. We are torn between temptation and virtue, almost as if there really is a little devil sitting on one shoulder and a little angel sitting on the other. How we resolve this inner conflict has everything to do with becoming Authentic (Core Action Value #1 in the course on [The Twelve Core Action Values](#)).

I think of it as a battle between Ego and Soul. Ego wants things, Soul wants time. Ego wants fame, Soul wants friends. Ego is insecure yet arrogant, Soul is centered yet humble. Ego is concerned about what other people think, Soul is concerned about others. When things go wrong, Ego points a finger, Soul looks in the mirror. Ego complains, Soul gives thanks. The voice of Ego is loud and demanding, the voice of Soul is soft and accepting.

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Ego and Soul are the yang and yin of personality. It's not that one is always bad and the other good; they can be complementary. When I start working on a new writing project, Ego is motivated by the prospect of having a bestselling book; Soul loves the feel of a good pen rolling across a clean sheet of paper and the thought that people I might never meet will be inspired by my words. The combined motivation produced by Ego and Soul together is more powerful than just one would be alone.

There are, of course, times when the two are in conflict. Ego might be secretly pleased to see a perceived rival fall on his face, while Soul wants to help him up, dust him off, and give him a gentle push in the direction of the winners' circle. Ego might want to go to Las Vegas while Soul wants to help build a house with Habitat for Humanity. Ego might want to take a nap while Soul wants to go for a walk.