Needs and desires, Personality, Identification

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Do enlightened people have needs and desires?

First, remember how I differentiate the meaning of the words Enlightened, Realised, Sage and Liberated. I can speak from personal experience for the former three, but not the latter.

My answer in a nutshell: Everything which an individual experiences (and dreams) down the years, both within themselves and in the (apparent) outside, shapes their personality. If this person experiences the innate interconnection of all manifestation through consciousness, then said person will still *have* a personality, but does not ***define*** him- or herself as that personality. The knowledge that one is an integral part of the great whole, the all-one (alone) – and always was, and can be nothing other than that – blunts the cutting edge of how the personality feels about its circumstances.

To illustrate that, speaking from my own experience: This individual organism has a number of needs, to be able to continue its existence: Air to breathe, food to eat, shelter from inclement weather and somewhere to sleep. And no-body is free from the restrictions of our culture, e.g. that we need money to buy most of these things. So needs: Certainly, in those respects. I think that the question here is if we are going to worry about it and get up-tight if things start looking uncertain on that level. As a not (yet) liberated being, I do have such thoughts – but I don't identify with them, and they have much less power over me than before I came to my current state.

There is a subtler level concerning things which we can term desires, things like the wish for friendship, intimacy, job satisfaction, and so on. These are not material necessities to continue existing – but they do seem to be built-in to humans as a part of what most of us need in order to feel relaxed, happy and fulfilled. However, life is under no obligation to provide us with such circumstances, and often enough it doesn't; so then the name of the game is: *How to feel as good as you can in spite of everything* (Julie Henderson). What that means is that there are a great number of exercises which can be performed during everyday life to support organismic and emotional well-being. [Get: Embodying Well-Being, Julie Henderson, AJZ Druck & Verlag]

On a deep level, I am always aware of the non-separation in consciousness, and thus that I am already in relationship with all beings. Therefore, I do not have any basic or psychological problem with loneliness, indeed I am glad to be (physically) alone most of the time. But the human morphic social field (see book three) seems so constructed that

most individuals wilt and become unhappy without some relationship on the physical and energetic levels, and this applies to me too – *as an individual organism*.

I find this an important point, so to hammer it home, here again, in slightly different words, how it is living in the dichotomy between being totally aware of non-separation and still, at the same time, being an individual organism: In the All-One-ness, I indeed cannot be alone – I am connected with everything; *at the same time*, however, as an organism, which for evolutionary reasons profits from and desires intimacy and comfort, I can certainly sometimes feel lonely. But then, in the perception of the All-One-ness, such feelings no longer have a lot of power.

Do even liberated people *still* have personality?

What I wrote previously about needs and desires does not state much about the question of personality. So first we need to ruminate on what we actually *mean* by 'personality'. In conventional, everyday life, we normally mean something multifaceted, including (but not limited to) the emotional makeup of a person and the way the culture they grew up in has shaped the way they act. But now we need to dissect the term 'personality', as its facets may or may not apply to liberated people. I distinguish the following facets, not intended to be a complete list, only those aspects relevant to the question at hand. The following terminology is my own:

1. Emotional Personality (deficiencies)
   The habitual, egocentric emotions a person has regarding their individual lives – insecurities, aggressions, neediness, self-judgement and so on.
2. Cultural Personality
   The facet reflecting the culture(s) which have shaped someone and the manner in which that person communicates, takes initiative, shows respect, selects sayings or allegories… At this point it is worth mentioning that language shapes the way we think to a non-trivial extent – it is an expression of a regional culture.
3. Emotional Nature
   How a person is given to emotion about circumstances – humorous, sad, exasperated, theatrical… but not as a protective measure regarding their own organism, rather, simply in regard of the interactions and situations in which they are involved. We can call this an emotional response pattern, not serving individual fear of loss or desire for gain.

My observation is that

- everyone without exception has cultural personality;

- everyone except spiritually advanced people have all three facets;
- emotional personality can be reduced independently of the spiritual path via appropriate therapy and exercises, but it cannot be eliminated by such means;
- in many 'normal' people (especially if any trauma is involved) the emotional personality may dominate over, or even eclipse, the emotional nature;
- while moving from enlightened to realised and awakened, emotional personality decreases, and may in time finally disappear in a liberated person.

So the highest truths which a liberated person utters will still be coloured by cultural personality, governing the metaphors chosen and the style and force of delivery, as their mind-energy-body organism puts impulses and pictures arising through TIC into spoken form.

But what about emotional nature in a liberated person? My observation of several such people is: Yes, they definitely do have it. Buckets and bathtubs full in some of them! Because now, there is no eclipsing of emotional *nature* by emotional *personality*. So I'll wind up here with some observations on a few spiritually advanced people, which illustrate the point.

I have two friends who I gladly learn from (not only from what they say, but also from their individual beings and how I perceive them). Coincidentally both of them are or were therapists. Yet in the personality they are so different. The one more spontaneous, more child-like (in the best possible sense) and thus also more confrontational (without the intention of confrontation – it's **me** that confronts myself with 'my stuff'). And the other amazingly gentle, kind and thoughtful in whatever she says; yet very clear in its content. They both have said to me that they also see 'personality' as part and parcel of being an individual organism (I did not ask which aspects they meant).

Moving on to the controversial and famous teacher Osho (Bhagwan): I experienced him live a few times in Pune, India; the energy of his presence was amazing. His copious lectures and the books made from them show that he was also a genius. All that notwithstanding, he was also a rascal who evaded taxes and loved expensive cars and jewellery. He enjoyed a good joke and also winding up his audience, which I believe he did for two reasons: (1) because he enjoyed riding the waves of emotion, juggling and amplifying them; and (2) more importantly, as a conscious provocation for people to see through over time, drop their Guru trips and wake up.

A prime example of a liberated being who had a **very** forceful emotional nature is Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj: *"I want to blast all your concepts and put you in the no concept state".* In various books of his talks I have read about him pacing around, gesticulating, shout-

ing at people, and even (frequently) telling people to go. There is only very limited video footage of Sri Nisargadatta, I recommend 'Awaken to the Eternal' – see for yourself! But look beyond the scary exterior and realise that Maharaj was responding to questioners in *his* natural way – there was no question of him having anything to prove, any inferiority complex or latent aggressions, i.e. no emotional personality in the sense of small mind with its own agenda. It was simply his emotional nature.

Projections get dropped

And they fall away, fall away, imperceptibly at first, then noticeably, finally like an avalanche. Goals in the outside world, people I looked up to, the desire to experience the outside world just for the sake of experiencing it – all these things fall away. I had projected my happiness, my progress, my success onto things in the outer world. These things no longer have any sway over me, I no longer aspire to them, no longer look up to those people. I don't even look up to my most important teachers any more[1]. I am connected with them, as I am with everything that exists. They are simply other facets of existence, as I am, as you are. The whole of existence is informationally interconnected in consciousness. IT develops only as a whole.

With the projections and external goals, a large part of conventional motivation also disappears. Should I be the one to keep existence itself rolling on? As long as I suffered from the illusion that I had to push my own small part of the big story, that's what I did. According to the motto: *If you want something to change for the better, look at your own hands – they are the hands of the divine.* An emotional appeal that has an easy target with do-gooders[2]. My assumption nowadays is, however, that existence will sooner or later play out everything imaginable – with or without your help .

What remains when all of that has gone?

Emptiness. Silence. Presence. Space. Space to be.

What remains despite all this are the necessities of individual existence as an organism. What I write here is not a plea for apathy with a begging bowl. At the level of a self-aware organism, desires such as health and fulfilment certainly remain. But also compassion, the desire to alleviate subjective suffering in others (from whom I am not separate). Why else did, and still do, the great spiritual teachers work until the end of their lives?

The point is to recognise that things happen on two different levels. The sage, as a manifest organism, fulfils the above mentioned aspects of his or her being an organism. At the same time, he or she is fully aware that, in the end, things take place entirely impersonally, as the

1 I am still extremely grateful to them, but I no longer put them on a pedestal.
2 Oops, did I hit a sore spot? So sorry.

stories of Existence develop and manifest. I do not see any contradiction in this – rather that things in a manifestation with sentient organisms simply are that way, and could not be otherwise.

So: They fall away, fall away, imperceptibly at first, then noticeably, finally like an avalanche…

Identifications get dropped

Generally, this effect starts when you've come to the experience of mutuality – I am, and you are. That is the first real experience of non-separation, albeit with one other being (it doesn't need to be with a human). It deepens as you move on to enlightenment: The underlying non-separateness of all phenomena in consciousness, including all beings, is now your experiential knowledge. When you know this, when you have embodied this insight, then typical identifications – with your family of origin, your personality with all its strengths and weaknesses, with your skin colour, nation and so on, will weaken considerably. I've written more about this in the article 'Family – a biological fact, but a problematic concept'.

When you become a sage, a no-one, then all *identification* as an individual has disappeared. Of course, one remains an individual *organism*, but one whose primary identification is with all of life, all of existence. This has profound effects on how you lead your life. Personal goals are remembered as echoes, but now only the development of the whole really matters. And even here, there is a sort of axis along which actions happen. At one end is the alleviation of suffering in all its forms; at the other simply joy – joy in sharing, joy in Being, joy and wonder at the diversity and surprises of Life itself.

I'm not talking about a mental attitude, but rather a (shared) perception; let me give you an example: Here I am, Tim, stroking a dog. At the same time, I'm the dog being stroked by that friendly, skinny guy. There is separation on the level of two organisms, but not on the level of awareness, nor in classification of the action as Tim is giving and the dog is receiving – it's all *one* happening.

Another example: I was taking part in a seminar with Julie Henderson, and one of the participants, who sometimes went hunting game, was asking her for her view on a planned hunting trip to shoot a moose. She replied: *Well I suggest you go mutual with the moose before you shoot it.* From comments he made after the session, I rather think he didn't get the point – because he was still thinking heady thoughts about the topic. The point is, that in mutuality you will be shooting a part of yourself, with intention to kill. I can't imagine that in true mutuality someone would want to do this. Unless perhaps there are too many moose, such as hunters in Germany cull deer when there are too many of them and they would eat too many young trees and shrubs and the local eco-

logy would get out of balance. But even so, who are we to judge? Perhaps we need an Enlightened Ethics Commission .

This topic, which may initially sound a bit theoretical, or 'spiritual', is in fact of profound importance to the development of a peaceful and harmonious society. This is because whenever you have an identification such as tribe or nation, then fanatical or power-hungry people can misuse that identification to turn people against each other. This can take 'mild' forms such as lack of cooperation and sharing, and can scale up to all-out war and genocide. But try to tell someone whose primary identification is with Life itself, that they must now go to the battlefield and shoot other people… it's not going to happen. And when enough people refuse all such activities then such activities are no longer viable and no longer happen, and thus society is transformed – from the bottom up.

Identification in personal life and relationship

I notice sometimes how remaining in identification with your organism makes people emotionally vulnerable. When adversity rears its head, people then have feelings like being treated unfairly, being under pressure, even existentially threatened. This can make them depressed, short-tempered or aggressive. In short, it makes them emotionally vulnerable to circumstances. Such states then also dominate their relationships with others.

This is what causes, or stabilises, emotional personality, as described above in 'Do even liberated people still have personality?'. As noted, one can alleviate such emotional vulnerability with appropriate therapy – but you can't get rid of it completely without removing the cause, which is the identification with oneself as an organism. And for that, you'll need to tread some sort of spiritual path.

I don't want to promise you heaven on earth here. When you identify *through experience* with larger conglomerations, especially the human morphic social field, then individual circumstances will be relativised; but you'll be in a wider realm which also has it's challenges, such as deprivation, famine, repression, manipulation and downright war. I find this hard to escape, and often enough have to remind myself to rest down even deeper, into Existence itself, into simple Beingness.