

Zones of Consciousness

Figure 3 below provides another perspective on the Ego in relation to God, Self and the Persona:

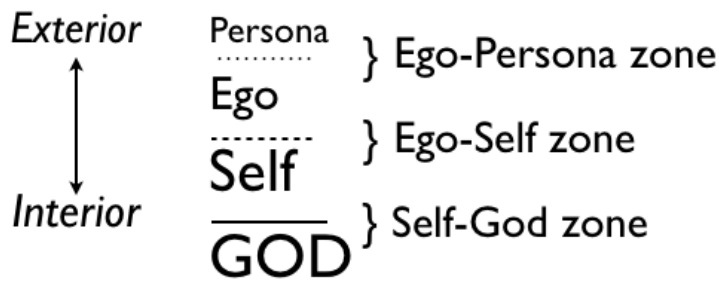


Figure 3: Zones of Consciousness

We note that God is most interior, dwelling in a depth beyond the awareness of Self. The solid line between God and Self is not meant to imply separation so much as distinction. God is not Self and Self is not God. And yet there is a Self-God zone,²⁵ which is the depth within where we receive God’s gift of existence moment-by-moment. The Self-God zone is a “sacred ferment” in that influence of the divine is most direct at this level.

Self is more interior than Ego, but the permeable boundary between them signifies that Ego arises from Self and can settle back into the Ego-Self zone when reflectivity and intentionality diminishes. The Ego-Self zone is also

²⁵ This conception is similar to more traditional expressions like “ground of being” or “apex of the soul.” Michaels Washburn’s idea of Dynamic Ground in *The Ego and the Dynamic Ground* is also similar.

charged with energy, as this is where the conscious and unconscious aspects of consciousness intersect.

Finally, we note that Ego is the awareness behind the Persona or mask we show to the outside world. This zone is one the Ego monitors regularly, especially if one is in the grip of false self conditioning (next chapter).

We will refer to these three zones more in future chapters, but it is enough to introduce them for now.

I and Me

Self as "that-I-am" is not particularly concerned about questions of identity, as it is enough to simply "be." Such is not the case with Ego, however. As noted above, our interactions with people and the world around us help us realize things about ourselves that we would not know otherwise. It doesn't take too many months of life outside the womb before we begin to realize that we ourselves are a player on the field -- someone with a name, relating to others who have names, and that some behaviors are acceptable while others are not. The child refers to itself in the third person for awhile, using its own name as a referent, but eventually comes to use the subjective pronoun "I" in sentences. This "I" indicates more than just a linguistic convention; it is a sign that the child's mind has developed to the extent that it is able to affirm a separation between the child and its environment. "I" in its most basic disposition means "the-one-who-speaks" and (implied) "the-