

Our Ultimate Truth – Sample Chapter by Mary-Anne Frank

Chapter 2

EGO – Edging Good Out

The greatest emotional challenges we face are the fear of not being wanted, the fear of not being ‘good enough’ and the fear of feeling separate or being alone.

If we focus on the Ego for the purpose of understanding it more, and let go of any opposing judgment on ourselves and others, then we can increase our awareness and have a higher possibility of mastering the life we want to create.

The Ego was created when we were very young. Too young to have a rational mind or make decisions based on clarity, we relied totally on the outside world to meet our emotional and physical needs. In order to get the outside world to respond to what we wanted, we had to learn an array of behaviours to get attention. We quickly discovered how to manipulate by crying or laughing, or whatever it took to feel connected. We copied and modelled our parents’ and other people’s behaviour by watching, listening and feeling our way. Through the early years, our environment was responsible for how we perceived the world, what we thought was right or wrong, and what felt good or bad. From there, we invented our own internal sensory system. I like to call this our emotional vocabulary, where we learnt by how others responded to us – whether we got a good response or not. We soon came to realize (or so we thought) that the outside world would reflect how we felt on the inside, thinking that others were responsible for how we felt.

As we grew, we thought behaving a certain way and how we looked would determine the level of approval and acceptance we received. We also worked out that anger, sadness, tears and anything other than looking happy was not acceptable. If we didn’t receive approval, we felt more anger and sadness because we felt separate.

We also discovered what embarrassment and fear felt like. Because of our parents’ decisions, even unworthiness crept into play. By not understanding that we were the source of our feelings, we decided to avoid and cover up any feelings that didn’t feel or look good, and to seek approval and acceptance from the outside world. As we grew, we learnt that the easiest way to protect our vulnerability was to control ourselves, our environment, and in some cases even other people. The problem was that by covering up our real feelings and trying to control everything all the time, we had to pretend that we were okay. Unbeknown to us, this would cause a great deal of anxiety later in life, because we became afraid to feel what we really felt.

The delusion is that we were mistaken from the start. It was never the outside world that dictated how we felt – it was the opposite. We were always responsible for how we responded to what happened to us. It was all a great big misunderstanding, because of what we perceive to be true and because our teachers lacked the awareness to guide us to understand what our feelings were all about.

Just imagine if we were told from the start that it was okay to feel all sorts of feelings and that there was nothing wrong with us? Imagine if we heard, ‘it’s okay to feel like that,’ or to be even asked, ‘what are you feeling right now?’ and, ‘let me explain how everything is going to be okay.’

Unfortunately, that wasn’t the case. The good news is I am here to remind you that there is nothing wrong with you: we all just had a huge lack of awareness.

Can you imagine how much money, health and self-value we would all have today if we didn’t have

to reach for relief to curb the anxiety we all feel? What would life be like without having to use booze, cigarettes, chocolate, drugs, compulsive shopping, gambling, or whatever your choice is, to feel relief from all your feelings?

I don't know about you, but I personally would have saved a fortune on therapy; and by my life choices I would probably be one of the richest women in the world today.

You see, because we were indoctrinated to believe certain things about ourselves and life, and were treated in certain ways which made us feel good or bad, we thought the outside world was the cause of how we felt.

As you will discover, we have been going about things in an unaware, disempowering state of being. Have I told you yet how amazing you are? But first of all, let's look at some reasoning to get a clear picture of how powerful, all-inspiring and incredible we really are.

Most of our parents came from the survival era. They were taught how to survive from a poverty mentality and adopted thinking patterns of fear, trying to protect themselves. Having this fear drummed into them about not having enough, it was in turn inflicted upon most of us. As we grew into young adults, we were programmed to believe that money was the key to survival, safety and happiness.

Our perception became our radar. Often off track, and with the media boom alongside, we began to gain new ideas and ways of seeking more approval and acceptance, as well as new ways of protecting ourselves – or so we thought. Because of our lack of awareness about the programming we received, and how our minds and emotions worked, we unconsciously started to plot a route through life. Unaware, we largely believed that if we were a good girl or boy, we would get loads of positive attention, which felt really good.

Continuing this need for approval and acceptance from others, we sought this in our careers and our relationships, which became our motivation to purchase a certain type of car, live in a particular area, and buy a particular brand. This is how labels of acceptance and approval were formed. Wanting to feel good and look good became the hidden agenda of the ego mind, to protect us (or so we thought) and help us avoid the pain of feeling not wanted, separate or alone. Gunning for acceptance and protecting our vulnerability only to be seen to look happy, we exhaust ourselves by trying to control everything, to make sure we get what we want. As we try our best, day after day, to feel great as we embody a false sense of self, this major fear we have in play of not being good enough has become the curse of the ego mind. And there we have it; the Ego Mind (EM) was born out of a need for approval, protection and control.

The more we felt controlled as a child, the more controlling we become in our adult lives. The more we felt restricted, disempowered or rejected, the more the adult Ego Mind rages within us, seeking even more approval and protection along the way. It is not the fact that we have an EM that causes our problems; it is simply our lack of awareness of it that creates so much anxiety, separation, depression and fear.

The emotional and mental struggles occur when we live in the ego mind. We continue to want and need more throughout our lives, so that we can look better than someone else, have a better title, a bigger house – all to give ourselves the assurance of getting more approval, feeling good enough and being accepted. The funny thing is, we are not even aware that we are doing it. This keeps us separate from what we truly are, which is the most exceptional, brilliant, worthy, valuable beings on Earth.

There is no doubt that we can have it all and be really happy having it – whether that is having the

best connection with someone, or the best car, house, and lifestyle.

The question is – are we happy? How do we really feel on the inside and why do we want and need certain things in life to determine our real sense of worth?

Let me demonstrate: Imagine I lined up 10 men or 10 women – whichever your sexual preference – and they all looked identical, wearing the same jeans and t-shirt. Unknown to you, they all had a different job title, different bank balances, came from different backgrounds and had a different story. Would it matter to you which one you chose? I imagine it would.

Did you know that this is simply the EM's superficial way of getting more approval through using another person? how we think of ourselves and others. We therefore seek possession so we can feel better than others, to guarantee our place of acceptance in the world.

Being envied offers the ego another assurance of approval. Remember, it is no one's fault; it is just how it is, through our lack of understanding that we are all worth it from the start.

Unfortunately, all our unhappiness, addictions, depression, fear, separation, and loneliness, comes from the EM.

It's pretty normal: 98% of people operate in this way. However, there is a much more pleasurable, meaningful and happier way to live.

The blessing is that apart from having an EM, we also have an authentic self. We share this innate wisdom that knows we want real meaning in our lives. We all know within us, on some level, that even though a person may look the part and have the best of everything, however as our real self starts to emerge this superficial way of life doesn't feel right and isn't enough at all.

Our wisdom sends us on a quest in search of our real value and what it means to feel our own connection. It asks us to reflect, let go, and be the beautiful soul we were born to be.

The Ego Mind keeps us trapped in fear and doubt of not getting approval from others. What the wisdom in all of us knows is that we just want to feel free – free to be ourselves, free to give love, free to receive love and free to love life. The only way we can connect to this precious part of ourselves is by having a willingness to acknowledge that our EM exists at all, and do a little internal adjustment.

When we appreciate that we all have an EM and understand that it is our responsibility to own it, we will take the first step towards our real happiness.

Because the EM seeks so much acceptance, it will compromise our own values to look good, to impress others, and to surround us with what we think will make us look attractive and believable. You know what's it like – how much we stress in front of the mirror and get really upset if we don't look good in what we are wearing, or if our hair doesn't sit right. This has become the difference between whether we feel happy or not.

How we look has become a trillion-dollar business. Imagine how many businesses would go broke if we all had our egos under control and knew what real beauty was?

The EM has a fierce competitive streak. When challenged, it will fight to the death to protect us. It wants to be right, therefore it will do whatever it takes to make someone else wrong. We all know how much we all love to be right, right? Have you ever listened to the righteousness come out of your mouth, like I have, and just wished you would shut the hell up?

We witness our own demise by watching ourselves become professional con artists, often lying through our teeth to either get what we want or to look good. Or am I the only one in the world to bend the truth or exaggerate? You must have caught yourself bellowing from time to time, and

thought, ‘OMG, I sound just like my mother or father?’ Once again, we are not being our true self. The EM wants to be wanted but doesn’t want to give. If we do give, it thinks ‘what’s in it for me?’ It wants to control everything and everyone, and only do what it wants when it wants. Unfortunately, it fails to have anything that resembles compassion and empathy. ‘It’s all about me,’ written and sung by the EM.

The EM is ruled by wanting to feel powerful and believes money and sex is the answer to getting it. The EM (bless us all) is driven by obtaining power from people and things. This becomes its emotional fuel, as it values money over people.

However, the authentic self is driven by feeling empowered and knows that empowerment comes from within. It fuels this self-driven inspired energy by adding value, accepting it is valuable and by valuing others. The authentic self knows that wealth is energy above money, because it knows that wealth is about thinking with a wealthy mindset; and by valuing people over money it attracts more wealth.

It takes practice, my friends, because we weren’t programmed to be authentic. We misunderstood. The good news is that our mind is like a computer and our programming is just data. With the right techniques, we can delete the fears and fantasies. By asking the right questions asked, and with some reflection, we can become who we dearly want to be – our real selves.

When we are aware of our thoughts and what makes us tick, we will have the genuine ability to demonstrate a great life, which comes from the path of authenticity and contribution. As we express this sense of inner thoughtfulness, we will uncover how to feel valuable from the inside out – never seeking acceptance ever again.

When I spoke with men about the subject of money and possessions, they agreed that they believed women and society judged them on their material value. They felt enormous pressure to look good in the eyes of the masses. They felt they had to be a certain way in their own minds to gain acceptance, or to even be accepting of others. Who would we be without comparing ourselves to others? Would you feel happier; less stressed? Would we attempt a life that we wanted, opposed to a life we thought we ought to live?

Luckily, we have all been born with a moral compass. We feel it every day and yet mostly we try to cover that up as well. We know when our moral compass is pointing true north. When we feel alive right in the core of our hearts, we feel passionate, our hearts skip a beat about what we are doing, we are excited to jump out of bed every day. And when we follow our true north, this is when we know that we’re on a journey of contributing to our lives and others. This is how we feel our true value.

We know we are aligned to our authentic self when we aren’t afraid to show up and give, instead of just taking. And we all know how much we love to take.

Here is a test to see how big our ego is. When it comes to relationships, dating, or even marriage, ask ourselves – do we want to be with a particular person because of what they do or who they are? If we took all the labels away, can we see the person for who they truly are? What qualities do they have, do we share the same values, and do we even know what our values are?

A good test to see if we are seeking an ego relationship or an authentic one is to also ask ourselves ‘do I want this person to give to me and make me look good or feel good? Do I want them to be a certain way to make me happy? Or do I want this person in my life because I want to genuinely make them happy?’

Interesting stuff, huh?

So many of us are guilty of wanting the candy in the store without really considering what's in the ingredients, if you know what I mean. Our hidden agendas, our unconscious thoughts and our emotional immaturity drive us into unhappiness through a complete lack of awareness.

Protection is the next part of the EM. Its job is to keep us separate from the authentic self. So, we wear a mask that covers up the natural, beautiful and connected gorgeous people we are, to protect ourselves from being found out that perhaps we are not good enough – because we fear we won't be accepted. This is what we see on almost every dating site – people not telling the truth of who they are, how old they are, their real names, whether they are married or not, and so on.

If we could simply appreciate for one moment that everyone has a fear of not being good enough on some level, then maybe we would be more understanding of who we are. How to overcome this fear is to take responsibility for how we feel; and do something about it.

One reason we struggle with not feeling good enough is because the EM seeks perfection. We try our best to be perfect and to be with someone who seems perfect, to make ourselves look even more perfect, because that will get us the highest sense of approval. The authentic self simply adores someone for who they are.

The men I interviewed said that they love real women. A woman that knows herself, someone who isn't afraid to be themselves, because it allows the men to do the same.

But is it really up to women to lead the way? I think not. I think we all need to be responsible for our own egos. The more we choose to wake up and let go of this need to protect ourselves, or the need for approval or control, the closer each of us gets to becoming more authentic and having it all – including real happiness, from the inside out.

Now we're getting serious. Lastly, the EM seeks control. This is the most challenging aspect any human can be faced with, whether it's the fear of being out of control, being controlled, or not being able to control something else. Whatever the state of control, it has alarm bells written all over it. The EM thrives on being in control. Don't you thrive on being in control? We all do, and, shock horror, we are all control freaks in one way or the other.

The problem is, once again, that when we are unaware of why we need to control people, situations, or ourselves, this can become exhausting. It creates huge anxiety and it can become dangerous. Most control freaks have highly addictive personalities and behaviours. Speaking from experience and without any judgment on others, we are all made of the same stuff when it comes to our EM. We simply act it out differently.

Give one control freak a few glasses of wine and they soon become the social butterfly seeking approval from the group. Another control freak may dominate the group, controlling everyone or trying to impress.

The strongest EMs are the extremists, so to speak, who love drugs, sex, drinking, shopping, gaming, porn, over-eating and anything else which gives this person a complete sense of freedom from trying to control everything all the time.

It's like we attempt to escape from our very own ego mind. But don't panic. Remember, we all have our built-in innate wisdom – called our authentic self – to come to the rescue. The body and the spirit within know best, as guilt, self-punishment and resentment over time become too uncomfortable to bear.

What's beautiful is that when this explosion of the EM is at its fullest, this is often exactly what is needed for the real self to appear. As the EM collapses, our true nature takes first place.

Every struggle we face presents an opportunity for the real self to show up and every emotional obstacle we feel is another opportunity to get real.

Jealousy is huge reaction of the EM. Always wanting to be number one in the eyes of the beholder,

yet only giving of their love when they want something, is a common trait. Get two unaware EMs together and wait for the sparks to fly and the drama to rule.

So what's the way to edge the 'good self' back in – the real self, the authentic self, the wise self, the true self? It's simply and sweetly called appreciation. Appreciate we all have an ego and there is nothing wrong with any of us but a lack of awareness. Appreciate that our parents did their best with the resources that were consciously available to them.

After the initial shock and guilt, and whatever else the dear ego comes up with for being found out, just know that the real you is amazing, valuable, beautiful, and wonderful in every way.

I encourage you to take a breath and be grateful that we are all learning about this now. Know that you will feel truly liberated when you give it time. Have fun with the EM. Love it and laugh at it, and practise that it's okay to have one. We only need to ask ourselves 'who do I want to be – false or real?'

Appreciate we all want the same things and we all have a few issues. Remember there is no such thing as perfect, only our delusional desire to be so, which will never happen – so how about we let that idea go once and for all?

When we start to appreciate who we are and what we have in our lives, what we do and what the universe offers us, we increase our awareness and start to create more meaningful, fulfilled lives. Once we start to practise living this way, we can appreciate that we don't need anything from the outside world to make us feel good enough, and we are free.

Appreciate that we may all look different and have different beliefs and ideas, but we also have many things in common – we all want to feel safe, we all want to experience abundance and prosperity in our lives, and we all want to feel valuable.

Not so different after all, are we?

'It only takes one person to change your life: You.' – Ruth Cosey