



Humility Really Cannot be Considered a Virtue, by Swami Dayananda S

Ego and pride are closely related, almost synonymous effects born of the same cause, ignorance of the relationship of the individualized sense of I with the world. (...) Although, graced by free will, I have the power to choose my actions, I have no power over the actual result of the action chosen; the result I anticipate can never be more than a probability among possibilities. I do not produce the result. The result of any act of mine, occurs both as the product of materials that I have not authored as well as the outcome of many circumstances, past and present, known and unknown, which must operate in concert for the given result to occur.

If my strong skillful arm throws the winning pass in the final seconds of an American football game, the material and circumstantial factors that come together to produce this are too many for the final result to be a matter for personal pride. I am neither the creator of the football itself nor of my athletic body. Many people and experiences contributed to the development of the skill in the arm that threw the ball. I am not responsible for the clearing of the rainstorm so that the game did not have to be canceled, or for the sharp earth tremor that occurred 60 seconds after my pass, since a minute earlier, my pass would have been spoiled. Nor can I claim credit for my colleague for who caught the pass to convert the possibility into the winning points.

Pride and ego, when examined, become so silly that humility really cannot be considered a virtue. Humility is simply understanding the world, including myself, because I am part of the world, just as it is. When I understand things as they are, I will be neither proud nor will I be self-condemning. Self-condemnation also is an expression of the ego (...), to be cleansed by the understanding that there is no locus for condemnation other than a particular thought. (...) I see that personal credit for anything is irrelevant and cannot be substantiated. I simply enjoy the world as a field for the discovery of knowledge, without pride, without egotism.

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