

Essay

Evidence of the Body Possessing a Form of Consciousness Beyond Its Soul

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Abstract

Freud defined three primary psychoanalytic functionalities for motivating behavior that have fallen into disuse: 1. The ID motivating instinctive behaviors, such as satisfying hunger drives and reaction to immediate threat; 2. The Super Ego pursuing moral ideals, such as self-sacrifice and honesty; and 3. The Ego for resolving conflicts between the ID and reality, and accommodating Super Ego demands. Freudian Theory is now generally regarded as detached from the current science paradigm which seeks to anchor behavioral theory in brain neurology. Whereas the ID and Ego may be mapped to identified areas of the brain, no Super Ego brain locality has been identified. This analysis proposes a solution for the missing Super Ego. The Out of Body Experiences reported from the trauma of a Near Death Experience (NDE) or meditation describe a discarnate consciousness or soul that is inherently moral as it functions in a Universal Field of Consciousness. This paper reifies the Freudian Super Ego to be equivalent to the soul and thus supports revitalization of Freudian Theory as valuable for clinical practice and personality research.

Keywords: Freudian, psychoanalytic theory, soul, consciousness, conscience, Szasz.

Freudian theory has fallen into general disuse as personality disorders have been sought in brain chemistry malfunctioning and/or neurological disorders (good coverage in *The Mind and the Brain*, Schwartz, JM, and Begley, S. (2002)). However, research conducted on the Out of Body Experience (OBE) associated with the Near Death Experience, meditation, and lucid dreaming has developed evidence of a soul whose character implies that a revised Freudian theory would have good empirical support for its Super Ego Construct; a classic review and theory concerning the NDE is in van Lommel, P. (2010) *Consciousness Beyond Life*. First we review evidence that supports linking the Id and Ego constructs to brain anatomy, and then present evidence to make the case that the OBE research literature supports redefinition of the Super Ego as the soul.

Where the Id functionality may be localized

The Id definition:

“The id according to Freud is the part of the unconscious that seeks pleasure. His idea of the id explains why people act out in certain ways when it is not in line with the ego or superego. The id is the part of the mind which holds all of humankind’s most basic and primal instincts. It is the impulsive, unconscious part in the mind that is based on the desire to seek immediate satisfaction, and avoid threats to survival. The id does not have a grasp on any form of reality or

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consequence. Freud understood that some people are controlled by the id because it makes people engage in need-satisfying behavior without any accordance with what is right or wrong. Freud compared the id and the ego to a horse and a rider. The id is compared to the horse, which is directed and controlled, by the ego or the rider.“ (Freud's psychoanalytic theories - Wikipedia).

Location of the ID function:

The primal brain (hindbrain and medulla) is responsible for survival, and coping with drives such as hunger and sex in response to external stimuli and memory routed from the hippocampus. The amygdala gets involved in reacting to immediate physical threats. Sexual behavior is more complicated, but no one doubts the brain is involved in sexual behavior.

The Ego functionality location

The Ego definition:

“In order for people to maintain a realistic sense here on earth, the ego is responsible for creating a balance between pleasure and pain. It is impossible for all desires of the id to be met and the ego realizes this but continues to seek pleasure and satisfaction. Although the ego does not know the difference between right and wrong, it is aware that not all drives can be met at a given time. The reality principle is what the ego operates in order to help satisfy the id’s demands as well as compromising according to reality. The ego is a person’s “self” composed of unconscious desires. The ego takes into account ethical and cultural ideals in order to balance out the desires originating in the id. Although both the id and the ego are unconscious, the ego has close contact with the perceptual system. The ego has the function of self-preservation, which is why it has the ability to control the instinctual demands from the id.” (Freud's psychoanalytic theories - Wikipedia).

Anatomical location for at least a part of the Ego function is in the medial prefrontal cortex:

“Scientists have identified neurons in the medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) that project to the brainstem to prevent social animals from acting on impulsive instincts in certain contexts. Being able to inhibit certain behaviors is an important aspect of the lives of a variety of social animals including humans, allowing us to maintain a functioning society” Franklin T. B., *et. al.*, (2017).

The Nature of Consciousness/Soul inferred from OBE reporting

There are at least a dozen features of the OBE reliably associated with its reports:

- *Time no longer has meaning, does not flow, and the past and present, even some future events, are available to see and experience;
- * Visits may be made to Earth locations distant from the body, or out to the cosmos (visits made to distant Earth locations may be checked later for accuracy of the knowledge acquired; visits made beyond the Earth in which previously unknown people are met, may be checked for accuracy about those people, such as by photograph and name).

- *Consciousness is much more acute than normally experienced;
- *Perception is radically enhanced, *e.g.*, colors are brilliant, and have greater variety, likewise all of the other senses are enhanced;
- *Visual perception is 360 degrees, with an ability to focus down to atomic particles or up to the cosmos;
- *Everything seen appears to be made of light;
- *Movement by thinking to move is instantaneous, and thinking is radically speeded higher, as if also instantaneous with no time running;
- *All entities experienced exude consciousness, not just people and angels, but animals, plants, and even rocks and water; [individual consciousness, souls, connect telepathically];
- *The world experienced is multidimensional, more than space-time;
- *If "going" all the way thru the "tunnel" to the other side, once there it is recognized as an eternal home that was left to have an Earth life;
- *By existing in the universal field of consciousness, all knowledge is felt as available; and
- *By existing in the universal field of consciousness, one feels they are part of God and feel His love for all."

Quoted from Hiller, J.H. (2020), page 98.

So, overall these features correspond to what may be described as an eternal discarnate consciousness or in common parlance the "soul." An argument is made here consistent with the text of *Space, Time and Consciousness*, Hiller, J.H. (2020), that the soul when freed from its hard attachment to the body functions in a Universal Field of Consciousness (UFC) which may also be characterized as the mind of God. The soul brings to the body the moral values that exist in the UFC and these values may often conflict with the ID and the Ego's pleasure seeking functions.

Evidence of the body possessing a form of consciousness beyond its soul

The theoretical contention here is that the soul, with its conscience, conflicts with the ID and with the Ego's pleasure seeking desires, and such a conflict would be the basis for therapeutic counseling. In the OBE research literature, it is reliably reported that all entities experienced exude consciousness, consistent with the philosophy of pantheism, so it is plausible to infer that the cells of the human body collectively own a form of consciousness. Direct evidence for this proposition comes from three cases cited next documenting support for an inference that the human body possesses a consciousness independent of its normally attached soul.

Case 1. The punching motorcyclist

From the archives of the Near Death Experience Research Foundation:

“When the motorcycle wreck happened I was knocked out of my body and that’s when the NDE happened, right away on impact. I was outside my body watching everything happen in slow motion to me, the bike and Frank. All I could think was ‘Poor Frank.’ I saw the guy hop out of his truck and run over to me kneeling down over me when I saw myself grab his hair and start punching him in the face. I wasn’t even in my body and I was still kicking some ass! I remember seeing people and the ambulance pull up and a couple of paramedics running over to where my body laid in the road motionless. I was again back in my body in tremendous pain everywhere in my body.” (https://www.nderf.org/Experiences/1jeffrey_c_nde_8890.html)

Case 2. Watching herself behave

“I had struggled with episodes of extremely rapid heart rate at a young age. At age 11, as I was standing up to leave band class, my heart shot into an extremely rapid heart rate, also known as ‘supraventricular tachycardia.’ I tried everything I could to get my heart to normal rhythm but eventually realized that an ambulance needed to be called to get me to a hospital.

My mom worked at my school at the time, so she joined me in the ambulance. The EMT gave me an IV and then began strapping down my body with the stretcher seat belts that went across my chest and legs. He eventually leaned over to whisper to my mom for a while and then pulled out a medication he said he was going to give me. (Later, I learned the medication is called Adenosine and is nicknamed ‘the medicine of doom’).

As he injected the Adenosine, he told me, ‘In a minute you’ll feel a little faint.’ I can distinctly remember staring at the clock on the back upper wall of the ambulance. All of a sudden, my legs got VERY heavy. It felt like cement cans were along my legs and everything went dark.

Within what felt like a second’s time, my nose was up against the clock that was hanging on the upper back wall of the ambulance. I could hear loud screaming around me and turned to look down at my body. My mom and the EMT were looking over me. One moment later, I was back inside my body looking up at my mom. I asked her immediately, ‘Mom, why were you screaming so loud?’ She responded, ‘I wasn’t the one screaming. You were’. To this day, I know that I left my human body behind. I know I heard the screaming while I was outside of my body. I saw the clock right against my face and remember turning around to see myself.”

(https://www.nderf.org/Experiences/1alison_b_probable_nde.html)

Case 3. Watching his body swim to shore

“I had only gone a few yards when my head began to buzz and I felt dizzy. A few yards more and I heard a loud snap. Suddenly the world was calm and clear. I could see the shoreline, still in the distance and noticed the sun shining overhead. It seemed brighter than usual. When I looked down I got the surprise of my life. There was my body, still swimming toward shore, moving as straight and smooth as a motor boat. I watched for a while, indifferent to the plight of my body. I was far more concerned with trying to figure out where I was. I noticed a light coming from somewhere behind me. It was a peculiar light. It had feeling. When I turned to see where this light was coming from, it would remain behind me. Somehow though, I managed to get turned around so I could look right into the light.” (<https://www.near-death.com/science/research/time.html#a05>) [Citation provided by Kevin Williams].

Conclusion

Given that the body by itself has demonstrated Id and Ego functions within the brain independent of its soul, it is likely that personality tensions and disorder may reflect a natural conflict between body and soul. A revised psychoanalytic approach that recognizes the reality of the soul may contribute to improved therapeutic practices and clinical research. One such perspective reflects the analysis of common mental "disorders" that had been made by Thomas S. Szasz (1974) in his classic text, *The Myth of Mental Illness*. Szasz argued that in his practice he did not usually find any physical diseases, but instead identified unresolved moral and ethical conflicts. The wiki summarized well his view:

"The legitimacy of psychiatry is questioned by Szasz, who compares it to alchemy and astrology,[4 and argues that it offends the values of autonomy and liberty.[5]. Szasz believes that the concept of mental illness is not only logically absurd but has harmful consequences: instead of treating cases of ethical or legal deviation as occasions when a person should be taught personal responsibility, attempts are made to "cure" the deviants, for example by giving them tranquilizers.[2] Psychotherapy is regarded by Szasz as useful not to help people recover from illnesses, but to help them "learn about themselves, others, and life." (The Myth of Mental Illness – Wikipedia).

Thus, a revised Freudian Theory which acknowledges the soul along with the body's ID and Ego may generate improved therapeutic practices.

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