

Eckhart Tolle: Spirituality, gender, sexuality, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non binary.

Most peoples sense of identity or part of most peoples sense of identity has to do with their gender. So how large this part is varies from person to person and from culture to culture. So, by that I mean a man feeling his sense of self consisting partly of his awareness of being a man. In some cultures that makes up, in some cases, 70% of a man's identity is the fact that he is a male. These tend to be traditional cultures where the roles, the division between genders is very pronounced. And a woman equally in those cultures, a large part of her sense of identity or sense of self would be around being a woman.

In the western world this is not quite as pronounced although still there. But there is less identification for ... women with being a woman than in some traditional cultures as this was in the past in the west also. Especially with people becoming more conscious the genders are coming a bit closer together. And that may well be true that there are more people now, who may not even be certain what gender they are. And so that is not necessarily a bad thing although it can be confusing for those people especially if they are young because everybody is looking for a sense of identity, a clearly defined sense of identity. And if they don't know if they are a man or a woman, then there seems something lacking. They cannot form any clear sense of identity based on gender, which seems to be an obstacle but does not have to be if they are given appropriate spiritual guidance. They could be shown, in fact it could be an advantage, to not know if you are there or there because it could make it easier for you to disidentify from identification with form because ultimately that is what it is – male or female forms. So if those people could be helped they could find out that actually it can be an advantage so that they can derive their sense of identity not from the physical vehicle because the physical vehicle maybe uncertain.

They could perhaps more easily than somebody who feels very strongly "I am a man and you are my woman". Wasn't there a famous pop-song ... Celine Dion "I am a woman and you are my man". So this is a good example of ... so that was a very successful song because it strengthened ... every woman who listened to that could identify with "yeah, I am a woman" and then you were out in a bar and then you meet a man "this could be my man". And the man did the same "there is my woman".

So you can see how much identity there is in that and there is a masculine ego and there is a feminine ego. In some cultures a woman has a particularly defined ego. In some cultures it seems that every woman has a high pitched voice. But it's because it's part of the ego role they adopt. In other cultures a woman is conditioned to behave in a particular way. She behaves in a constrained way, she can't laugh too loud. There was even a pronouncement made by a politician in one of those countries that a woman should not laugh in public. It's not becoming to a woman to laugh in public. So in the United States it is perfectly acceptable for a woman to laugh out loud. You see it often.

It's a trap to derive your psychological identity from your male gender or your female gender. Both of them are trapped in their little worlds, their little identities. So we are going beyond that and I believe in the more distant future for mankind the two will come together at some point anyway.

But for the time being let's see if we can help those who are uncertain about their gender and point to them the possibility of not identifying with any gender and go deeper immediately. So anybody who comes into contact with young people who are uncertain perhaps you could point that out. It could be the beginning of a spiritual path. Sometimes you get a difficulty in life or early in life at the same time the opening into a spiritual awakening. So that can also be the case – or it used to be more so in the past – for a gay person, man or woman. It still presents certain – even now is more acceptance around it – it still presents certain challenges. And in the past it's been a gigantic challenge because it was rejected by society. So in the past if a man or a woman who was gay immediately was an outsider – at least internally – ... Now it's much easier to – at least in western countries – to accept that. The trap here could be, that ... you find it sometimes with gay people that instead of going beyond gender identification they have a very strong identification with being gay. And so they over emphasize the gayness and that becomes an ego role that they play. That is a trap for those people. So you need to be aware because the are may situations where the ego can come in and use it for its purposes.

I mention in the "Power of Now" for a gay person the advantage is that to some extent – even though there is greater acceptance nowadays – the gay person can still feel a little bit of an outsider and so that is always a great advantage for anybody who does not fit in totally with the mainstream. Because that can create an early disidentification from mainstream egoic identities and then the arising of spiritual awakening can become easier.

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<https://youtu.be/9s0DBFnJS2I>

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