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## **Psychoanalytical Aspects in Sudeep Nagarkar's *It Started with a Friend Request***

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### **Abstract:**

The present research paper portrays the development of characters in terms of psychological aspects. Their psychological turmoil, conflict, break up, patch up, frustration, obsession, possession, romance adequately picturized in *It Started with a Friend Request*. The play depicts how youngsters can go to any level to get their love. It shows their insecurity in modern love and how psychology compel them to be alienated from the society and family. It demonstrates the helplessness and the disturbed psychology of modern society. Though technology brings closer to the world but actually it is increasing the gap between the generations. Now a days people are focusing on privacy in their life, on the contrary they are getting alienated and found themselves involved in illegal activities. In the present novel, characters are coming close to each other with the help of technology but at the same time they are increasing the hatred and jealousy among them. One can find the disturbed state of mind of the characters. In the present research paper, I will locate the reasons behind the disturbed state of mind of the characters in 'It started with Friend Request' by applying Sigmund Freud's Psychoanalysis theory. Also, I will connect the Id, Ego and Superego with characters by emphasising the importance of Ego for the healthy society.

**Keywords:** Id, Ego, Super ego, Psychoanalysis, Higher Nature.

### **Introduction:**

Sudeep Nagarkar's novels portray the modern love which is so advanced as compare to the traditional love i.e. more reliable. In his novels, one finds the modern love which illustrate the possessive, destructive, obsessive and erotic love which has no boundaries, no hesitations, no limitations. If you pore over his *It Started with a Friend Request*, you can observe love, blame, quarrels, fighting, breakup and again patch up. The characters behave differently in different situation. In traditional love, there were certain boundaries, assumption, respect for both parties, following the norms of the society but in his novels, one can find completely opposite to it. The characters are coming together enjoying their company then break up and again coming together or bid goodbye forever. It delineates how the definition of love is changing generation after generation.

One can also notice that Sudeep Nagarkar develops the plot of his novels by developing the characters. As novel gives a scope to imagination in the writing, he has successfully developed his stories with many twists, to bring curiosity among readers. In his novels, some characters are taking the steps like suicide, which depicts the disturbed human relationships. Characters are at the centre point and getting involve in each other's psychology and brings the conflicts between their relations. The referred conflicts compel us to see them from psychoanalysis lenses, as they are concerned with human psychology.

### **Psychoanalysis Theory:**

Psychoanalysis is a psychological theory developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries by Austrian Neurologist, Sigmund Freud. It is a branch of psychology which studies the relationships between conscious and unconscious mind. It becomes necessary to explore why people behave differently in the same situation. It is due to past experiences of individual which forces him to act in those particular ways. Frued opines conscious mind possesses thoughts, memories, perceptions which are easily accessible on the other hand unconscious mind having supressed instincts, desires. Unconscious is that corner of mind which is away from the conscious mind and it is so painful for a person to bring those repressed memories into conscious mind. He rightly argued in his book *The Ego and the Id*, "I have already, in another place, suggested that the real difference between a Ucs. and a Pcs. Idea (thought) consists in this: that the former is carried out on some material which remains unknown, whereas the latter (the Pcs.) is in addition brought into connection with word-presentations." (Frued, 201)

Word representations are the residues of memories which were at one time the perceptions and like our past memories or mnemonic residues they can be brought into consciousness; we call it Preconsciousness. There are some latent ideas which are in latency condition of mind but can be brought to consciousness with little efforts. They exist in our mind and have the capacity to enter in conscious mind. It can be termed as preconscious mind. On the other hand, some latent Ideas which don't have capacity to enter in consciousness but they can come through dreams are called unconsciousness. Freud proposed three aspects of human psychology such as Id, Ego, Superego.

Id is the most primitive side of human personality. It has the basic instincts, repressed desires, scattered wishes, impulses, needs, especially the sexual (libidinal) desires which were repressed in his/her childhood. Some instincts that he derives from his ancestors from generation to generation inheritably. Id starts from the child's birth, and last too long unless it gets the continuous gratification. It works on pleasure principle. Its major focus is on immediate satisfaction, for that it is ready to go at any level. Effects, consequences cannot stop Id from achieving the target. There were many things in individuals' childhood which were beyond his capacity or reach but somewhere he wanted to fulfil those desires. Those desires get repressed in his mind and goes into unconscious side of mind. Especially the libidinal desires get repressed in Id, and to gratify those desires Id finds ways though they are illegal. Id never thinks to protect his own organs. It just follows the 'Pleasure Principle'. Delays to gratification is beyond the imagination of Id. Id needs to release the mental tension through somatic process, else found itself in frustration.

Ego is the modification of Id. It works through censoring perception and muscular action in the external world. Its main function is to control the desires of Id until the favourable situation. If situation is not in favour, then delays or suppress those desires. As Ego is in contact with the outer world, it works like a noble friend who controls the wishes of his friend but whenever time comes, he works like a mediator between the Id and his desires who allows him to gratify his needs but some other ways. It transfers the unconscious desires to conscious through his censorship. It works in defensive mode by protecting Id from spoiling the image and damaging from outer world. It works on reality principle with the help of conscious and preconscious mind. Ego behaves practically and bridges a gap between Id and the superego. Freud rightly said in his book *The Ego and the Id*:

The functional importance of the ego is manifested in the fact that normally control over the approaches to motility devolves upon it. Thus, in its relation to the Id it is like a man on horseback, who has to hold in check the superior strength of the horse; with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with his own strength while the ego uses borrowed forces. The analogy may be carried a little further. Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go. (Frued, 24)

So, in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the Id's desires into action as if it were its own. Frued compares the ego with horse rider who controls the powerful horse i.e. Id. The horse has plenty desires to fulfil but the rider shows the right path to the horse. On the other hand, rider shows the outer world, as if horse following his command but actually, he is also obliged to guide the horse.

Superego works on the principle of 'Conscience'. The feeling of punishment, guilt, death, severity, cruelty, prohibition, criticism are the major tools of it. Superego though it is developed from ego, has certain freedom. It follows the virtues and warns against the sins. Specially in melancholia it threatens the ego about its past ill deeds. Treats the ego rudely and compels the ego to sacrifice the instinctual desires. Ego repressed all the desires due the fear of superego, in returns gets the love feeling from superego. Superego and Id have close bonding. As a child wish to complete certain desires but parents restrict and prohibit him for doing so. Superego represents the internal world of the Id. The conflict between two i.e. real world and psychical world can be seen in individual life. The Superego expect the 'Higher Nature' from the person, on the contrary the ego somewhere compromises with the values to gratify the instinctual needs of Id. A child observes his parents in his childhood. He admired, feared his behaviour and remembers his prohibitions and follows them as standards for himself. As he grows up, he follows his teachers and others and remembers their restrictions and prohibitions, and follows them in his life. These standards and prohibitions become conscience in his life. 'Conscience' is the tool of superego to control the wishes of Id. In simple words, we can sum up that the superego is like the chief of the family i.e. father, who controls the illegitimate behaviour of the children of family and focuses on the society accepted norms, on the other hand Ego is like the friend of the child (Id) who plays the role of mediator and shows the middle path for the gratification of desires of the child. (Id)

### **Psychoanalytical Aspects in *It Started with Friend Request*:**

In the present novel, the characters are engaged in their personal interest which brings the psychological turmoil in the story. One can notice the positive as well as negative traits of the personality in the characters. The story contains full of romance, suspense, thrill and the conspiracy as well.

Id is represented by Tamanna in *It Started with a Friend Request*. Tamanna, a desperate character in this novel, was very beautiful and bold kind of girl, who was living in Mumbai. Due to the higher pressure in the office, she became workaholic. The play showcases how her libidinal desires get repressed. It orchestrates the plenty Indian youngsters those are running behind the money by sidelining their wishes. The present play showcases the buried desires of Tamanna which turns to be Id, the psychological term. She had feelings for Deep, a handsome looking and kind hearted boy. As Id finds its target to gratify its desires. She located that target in the form of Deep who can gratify her libidinal desires. She was fascinated by his masculine body and had a strong feeling for him. In addition, she was the boss of Deep, so the target is under the tutelage of Id. It becomes very easier for her to control the target as his self-appraisal, salary, promotion, HRA, Gratuity comes under her authority. Near the coffee machine, she was latterly fascinating him as if he was caressing her back and making a love scene with her. It is nothing but the obsession and this obsession compels her to take wrong, illicit decisions in her life. The urge to gratify those desires explores how her Id is bouncing and controlling her life.

The goa tour ,cruise party are adequate to showcase her strong Id. Her last attempt demonstrates her surrender in front of powerful Id. She was anticipating to satisfy her libidinal repressed desires and Deep was the only option to gratify those desires. As Id can take any steps to snatch its target, she lied to Mr. Verma that they both i.e. Tamanna and Deep are going to attend the client meeting at Andheri, even she lied Deep as well. The seducing attire and alluring act at the farmhouse, reflects her helplessness and demonstrates how the Id bend down to its victims. Further actions taken by Tamanna confirming that she was haunted by Id. She was rebuking him about his job as she was his boss and forcing him to come back. She called Aleesha to inform her about the double role of Deep i.e. Deep for Tamanna and Akash for Aleesha. She didn't stop there, she informed Aleesha that Akashdeep was forcing on her for physical relationship, by anticipating their breakup. The constant attempt to gratify her desires demonstrates her unfulfilled libidinal impulses. Id overpowered Tamanna's feeling to the extent that she was ready to do anything to get Deep back in her life, for that she was ready to spoil

his carrier too. It explores how desperate she was to gratify those desires. Tamanna had some scattered desire and repressed basic instincts especially the libidinal one which she wanted to gratify. As Id never anticipate the consequences, she too never thought about the consequences and compelling Deep to make love. As Id needs the immediate satisfaction, she needed the immediate gratification, for that she was ready to go at any level, even she was ready to spoil the carrier of the beloved one i.e. Deep. She just wanted to release the tension, and it can be released via erotic love. Her obsession got to the height of intensity that she called Aleesha and said:

Your boyfriend has left me alone... You might not know that he worked with me in my office. But today, he tried to force me to be physical with him. When I didn't agree, he tried to force himself upon me. Somehow, I managed to protect myself... these guys won't ever understand us and will continue to play with our emotions. I am warning you to stay away... the rest is up to you. You decide whether to trust me who supported you every time, or trust a guy who has just come in your life and is pretending to be loyal to you. He is a big-time cheat who loves playing with the emotions of girls and misuses them as mere toys.  
(165)

As mentioned earlier, for immediate gratification or Pleasure Principle, Id does not think of its own organs, likely, due to the rejection and the feeling of frustration, she had had overdose of drugs and drunk too much, here one can notice pain principle. She was not in position to drive the car. The fear of losing Deep, and forecasting the failure in gratification, she drives her car overspeed and crashed on the divider by letting the entire world into grief and suspense. The act of drink and drive by damaging own organs and life, demonstrates the characteristics of Id. As id never thinks of good and bad, virtues and sin, it just wanted the satisfaction and that can be traced in the case of Tamanna.

Akashdeep demonstrates Ego in this novel. He wanted to marry Aleesha but being the subordinate and the crush of Tamanna, he can't reveal the truth to both of them. Demonstrating the Ego by his character, he was handling both of them skilfully. Leaning towards one may bring the trouble in the story, so delays and postponing the desires, which are the features of Ego can be traced in his character. Akashdeep had certain responsibility of his family. His mother got retire few years back and he had witnessed his father's layoff, struggles to get another job, and died due to frustration. This incident taught him how life plays with us and

understood the importance of the job. He wanted to be professional at his job and never wish to mix his personal life to office life. He never wanted to compromise with the business ethics for personal gain. Consciousness about the societal norms and the sense of responsibility demonstrates the Ego from his character. The anxiety of compromising the values and concern about ethics shows his responsible nature which makes him the worshiper of Ego.

Though he wanted to call it an end and quit his job, he knew practically he couldn't take that step as he had responsibilities on his head. To fulfil the same responsibilities, should he jump in an ocean of greed by killing his self-respect or respect the dreams that he once saw with his dream girl? (77)

The above text demonstrates his concern about his responsibility and how job is important for him can be seen from his concern. Quitting from job is not affordable him at the same time, he is in dilemma that he cannot surrender in front of the greed of Tamanna. The basic feature of Ego is, it thinks practically, the same can be noted from the above text. He is the only person in the entire novel who thinks practically. Consequences are foreseen by the lenses of Ego, which makes him the follower of Ego. The above text demonstrates how Akash was serious about self-respect, principles, ethics which makes his personality balanced. As Ego fulfil the desires at appropriate time and with appropriate relations, Akash finding all those qualities in Aleesha. But considering the possessive nature of Aleesha, Akash feels hesitation to convey about his job. Anticipating that confession about his job profile, and the boss i.e. Tamanna, may produce conflict in their relationship and he may lose her forever. On the other hand, he cannot confess about his love (Aleesha) to Tamanna as she deeply loving Deep i.e. Akash for Aleesha. The concern about losing someone good at the same time avoidance towards illegitimate relation with Tamanna demonstrates the traits of Ego. A practical person avoids to mix his personal life with office life, same concern can be seen by his attempts i.e. gaining the love of Aleesha and avoidance the lust of Tamanna. He admitted that he cannot mix his personal life to professional life. He said that he cannot cross his limitations and be Tamanna's life partner. They are just friend, and nothing else. To convince her, he said:

I don't want people talking about us in office or pointing out fingers at me, the way they do with Kajal. People are too narrow- minded when it comes to such relationships. They don't understand the depth of any relationship. They just need some hot topic to discuss and I don't want to be the topic of such discussion. Therefore, I think we should stop here. (161)



The awareness about the relationships i.e. legal and illegal can be traced from the above text. How Akash was serious about the society, and his reputation demonstrates his temperament of middle-class family, he has certain limitations and responsibilities too, sidelining them may make him the topic of hot discussions. It demonstrates the urge of Akash to maintain the dignity in the society. Ego does the same. It considers the societal norms and takes the right decision.

Thus, I tried to keep some distance whenever you tried to open up your heart to me. But it's high time now and I don't want to raise your hopes.....I should have told you this long before when I came to know about your intentions, but I never got the chance. The couple of times I did get an opportunity, I chickened out for unknown reasons. (161)

It depicts the Ego of Akashdeep that he was aware about the feeling of Tamanna, but deliberately he was keeping certain distance between them. He did not want to raise her hopes, indicates his conscious mind. He confessed Tamanna that he wanted to tell her about his love i.e. Aleesha, but he was not getting the right time.

The consequences of this illicit love with Tamanna were so furious that he may lose his true love forever, in addition the death of his father due to recession still vivid in his memory. Being in active position, Ego directing Akashdeep to behave according to situation rather than only satisfying personal desires. A man having strong Id (libidinal), would have benefited himself by satisfying Tamanna's desires, but his Ego guiding him to take the right decisions. His conscious mind helping him to take the right decisions, emphasising right by sidelining wrong. Though delays are foreseen and requires to postpone the desires, Akashdeep demonstrates the same composure as Ego does. Akashdeep never thought about the satisfaction or gratification, rather he was postponing the desires and waiting for the right moment. Finding himself in dilemma i.e. the obsession of Tamanna and the true love of Aleesha, Akashdeep was dealing with both i.e. Tamanna- ID, Aleesha- Superego. As Ego finds the middle path, and waits until the right moment, Akashdeep did same and finally he conveys his feelings to Tamanna that he loves truly Aleesha, and don't have any space for her in his life. At the end he convinced Aleesha that he was not forcing him on Tamanna, she was desperate about him and seducing him for physical relationship. Even she conspires to break their relationship by calling Aleesha. Finally, Akashdeep succeeded in attempt by getting the love of Aleesha forever. It depicts how Akash tackle the situation skilfully. Waiting for the right time, postponing the

desires, sense about societal norms and practical thinking and protecting Id from outer world are the traits of the Ego. All these traits manifested by the role of Akash. Ego demonstrates certain difference from Superego, which behaves hyperactive on the other hand Akashdeep reflecting the practical and highly professional character. Ego plays the role of rider for the horse i.e. Id, who controls the Id's desires, in the same way from all his acts and attempts in the entire novel he was controlling Tamanna's libidinal desires i.e. Id.

Being the hyperactive character from this novel, Aleesha represents Superego which works on 'Conscience'. Playing the role of prohibitor as done traditionally by our parents, Aleesha through entire text was controlling and prohibiting Akash in many ways unnecessarily. As mentioned above the feeling of guilt, prohibition, cruelty, severity, punishment are the tools of Superego. Same tools had been used by Aleesha over Akash to control his desires by manifesting the fear of punishment. Superego behaves like a father who wished everybody to be in his control. Aleesha was manifesting the same role by controlling the behaviour of Akash. Being rude unnecessarily with Akash, she was demonstrating the severity from her character, which can be considered one of the features of Superego. It can be experienced from the scene of supermodel, who wore a bikini and Akash was staring at her. Aleesha feels discomfort and walking by keeping some distance by muting herself. She portrayed her suffering through the following dialogues...."How cheap. You're sick Akash. We're in the middle the road and you're staring at that poster like a despo. Don't talk to me. Buzz off,' Aleesha shouted in anger and started walking ahead of Akash as if she didn't know him". (96)

The severity reflected from her suffering which makes us to notice the hyperactive nature of Aleesha. As Superego expects 'higher nature' from others, same traits can be traced from her character. Akash was continuously pleading her to forgive but giving him sense of guilt, she avoided to talk with him, anticipating his avoidance towards illicit things may strengthen their relationship. The response given by Akash made her to lost her temper. He was continuously following her and wanted a smile on her face, everything in vain. It shows her hyperactive nature, and how she is reacting to the common thing demonstrates the Superego of her character. Another trait of Superego is the feeling of guilt, same guilt manifested by Aleesha when she realizes that she behaved unnecessarily rude with Akash. In this context, she texted him:

I am sorry. I know I overreacted to the whole thing, but even you were wrong.  
You should have thought before saying those words which hurt me. I shouldn't

have been so rude but I lost it..... Im not hot? I have better ones. :D. Sorry. You know, the thing that I realized after our first fight is that I know our relationship can survive a disagreement too. I cried when I left the station. I know you were hurt and it was killing me from inside. I couldn't cheer up knowing that there were tears in your eyes. The lips with a drop of tear on it are the best ones to kiss. Let me kiss you. Muahhhhh! Love you Mickey... I eagerly waiting for Saturday. (99)

It shows that Aleesha was regretting for her hyper nature. Even she felt sad about her sever nature and feels guilty for her acts depict the Aleesha's active Superego. The feeling of guilt and hyperactive nature, which are the major features of Superego can be traced from Aleesha's character. She agreed that she behaves rudely and severely. She was expecting 'Higher Nature' from him. Another incident manifests her hyperactive nature, when Akash holding Kritika's hand to say thanks for her help, suddenly Aleesha came and saw them together. She lost her temper and blaming both of them for their behaviour without knowing the background of the situation. She said,

"How dare you? I mean how could you cheat on me and sit here with my friend? Akash, I trusted you so much,' Aleesha yelled. ....I don't want any clarification. I shouldn't have trusted him. All boys are the same. They just want their desires fulfilled and nothing else. He has done it with me and moved on to the next girl. Tomorrow it will be someone else,' she said". (137-138)

One can notice the hyperactive or the severe nature of Aleesha with others. She wanted to prohibit Akash from losing the track as the superego does but at the same time, she was sidelining the reality. Which actually framing a gap between their relationship. Unnecessarily rudeness gives rise to the conflicts and same can be traced from her character, which demonstrates her Superego. Aleesha thought prevention is better than cure, so controlling his behaviour is the only option for her. Without trusting him, Aleesha was blaming both of them for having illicit relationship. Definitely as the father of the family, a person must have concern about the members of the family, but unnecessarily controlling the members of the family, and demonstrating severity and rudeness brings the conflicts in the relationship.

Final incident depicts her deep love for Akash. In the farmhouse scene, when Tamanna called Aleesha and told her that Akash is playing with both of them, and Akash and Deep are not the different but the same i.e. Akashdeep. Further she informed Aleesha that Akash was

forcing on her for having the physical relationship, by creating chaos behind, Tamanna died in the accident, leaving back the mystery of her death. When police called Akash and interrogating him, they interrogate Aleesha too.

Aleesha, do you know this guy?' the officer asked. She thought to herself, I think I should tell the truth to the cops. Should I tell them that Tammy di had called me up last night and had confessed that he had forced himself upon her? But I love him. How can I? No, I can't. Or should I? Oh God, why me? Though he has made a fool out of me, I can't do that to him. I can't disrespect my love. I wish I did not love him so that I could punish him for all the pain he caused to Tammy Di. If I do the same thing as him, what's the difference between my love and his betrayal? That's it. I can't. 'No! I don't know him,' she said staring at him with tears rolling down her cheeks. (174)

One can notice how Aleesha lied to police to protect Akash from ruining his life. Her one statement could have destroyed his entire life, but as the parents do to save the respect and dignity of the family, she lied to police to save his life and dignity. A practical and a person having strong Ego would have confessed everything to police, but as overpowered by Superego and being possessive in the love of Akash, she sidelined the truth and lied to police that he not involved in death of Tamanna. Actually, one night before Tamanna called her and confessed everything that how Akashdeep forcing her for physical relationship. Aleesha's love was powerful than anything, they both love each other deeply and can sacrifice anything for the love. As the parents after knowing truth, they forgive the children, Aleesha too forgiven Akash and they both came together. 'Principle of Conscience' in the form of Aleesha saved life of Akash.

### **Conclusion-**

There are many people in the society, who are the victim of Id. The fact is that they are unaware about Id because it is in unconscious mode and beyond the reach of conscious mind. The conscience can't stop them. In the present novel, though the Id is represented by female character but actually most of these traits can be traced in male community. We witnessed many incidents like, molestation, exploitation, rapes around us, but if you discover the route cause behind such illicit act, you will get the answer i.e. psychological turmoil and imbalance. The presence of more strong Ego individuals in the society is the sign of healthy society. A person who thinks practically is more contributory to the society than a person thinks emotionally.

That's why people use to say, a person should have strong Ego in psychological language who works on ethics and follows the societal norms. Superego demonstrates the hyperactive composure which displays the concern and insecurity behind the relationship. A person having strong Superego can bring the conflicts in the relationship, which can disturb the balance of relationship. In search of Higher Nature, Superego brings complexities in relationships. Hence to maintain the balance of relationships and society, the greater number of strong Ego individuals is needed.

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