

Who I Am and Who I Want to Be

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How I See Me



Did you know you may see yourself differently than others see you? In order to know who you really are, it's important to take time to discover how you see yourself. The way you view yourself has a great deal to do with how you live your life. It affects what you think, how you act, what you say, and even how you feel.

When you see yourself as a good person, we say you have a *positive feeling* about yourself. When you think bad things about yourself or your actions, you have *negative feelings*.

Positive feelings give you a good self-concept. You have high self-esteem when most of your feelings about yourself are positive. The better your self-concept is, the better you feel. When you feel good about yourself, you are a happy person.

Negative feelings can cause you to feel you have little worth and are a bad person. These feelings lower your self-concept. Negative feelings can cause you to feel sad or depressed.

You can't feel good all the time. All of us experience times of unhappiness. However, the better you feel about yourself, the happier you will be. Positive feelings help make for a good self-concept.

In this chapter you're going to take a long look at the way you see yourself. By the time you finish the chapter, you'll have a good idea exactly why you see yourself the way you do.



A Survey of My Attitudes

A first step in discovering how you see yourself is to take a survey of your attitudes. Respond to each of the following statements by circling the code which *best* describes you.

If you agree with a statement, circle the letter A at the right. When you disagree with a statement, circle the letter D. If you can't decide how you feel about a statement, circle CD.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. I can tell my friends my feelings. | A D CD |
| 2. I can talk easily with people I don't know. | A D CD |
| 3. I can express my feelings and thoughts when I am part of a group. | A D CD |
| 4. I feel comfortable introducing myself to people I've just met. | A D CD |
| 5. I can accept a compliment when it is given. | A D CD |
| 6. I am aware of my weaknesses. | A D CD |
| 7. I can listen to others and understand their feelings. | A D CD |
| 8. I get upset easily. | A D CD |
| 9. I am unaware of my strong points. | A D CD |
| 10. I can keep secrets. | A D CD |
| 11. The students in this school are warm and friendly to me. | A D CD |
| 12. Most kids aren't really interested in school and learning. | A D CD |
| 13. I enjoy giving compliments to people who deserve them. | A D CD |
| 14. Most of the time I solve my problems with friends by arguing or fighting with them. | A D CD |
| 15. I can talk with my teachers when I have problems. | A D CD |
| 16. I am proud of my school. | A D CD |
| 17. My teachers are warm and friendly. | A D CD |
| 18. Our principal really cares about the students. | A D CD |
| 19. The counselors have time to listen to my problems. | A D CD |
| 20. Our assistant principal deals fairly with us. | A D CD |

My List of Personal Adjectives

Adjectives are words that describe. Since you're going to be using words that describe you as a person, these words will be *personal adjectives*.

Here are some pleasant or positive personal adjectives that people might use to describe themselves:

confident	reliable	kind	lucky	cheerful
courageous	energetic	calm	clever	relaxed
content	loving	sensitive	concerned	interested
curious	eager	earnest	bold	secure

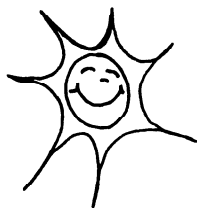
Here are some negative personal adjectives:

angry	hateful	depressed	miserable	sulky
uncertain	unsure	lost	tense	alone
useless	pathetic	nervous	scared	suspicious
dejected	hurt	sad	unhappy	bitter

There are hundreds of personal adjectives you might use to describe the way you see yourself. Those listed above should give you some ideas and start you thinking about what adjectives best describe the way you see yourself.

Think of the box on these two pages as your day. You'll move through this "day" from left to right.

early morning



Decide on personal adjectives that describe the various times during your day. Don't limit your choice of adjectives to those in the lists.

Then you'll fill in the day, listing words that describe how you feel in the morning, at noontime, in the afternoon, after school, and in the early and late evening. To see how this works, here are a few possible examples.

- "Tired" might fit in the early morning because you stayed up late the night before and were not ready to get out of bed.
- "Worried" could come in the early morning because of a big math test.
- "Relieved" might come about midday when you've lived through the test.
- "Bored" could describe the way you felt right after lunch when your language arts teacher had to answer questions about things you already knew.
- "Excited" describes your feelings right after the sixth hour when your best friend asked you out for pizza and Cokes.
- "Disgusted" might fit when your seventh hour teacher gave you a big homework assignment.
- "Relieved" might fit again when you finish that assignment.

Now fill the box with your own adjectives.



late evening

Once you've filled the box with adjectives that represent your day, look back over your day. As you read the adjectives you've written for various parts of the day, answer these questions:

What time or times during the day do I seem to be in the best mood? _____

At what times do I seem able to do my best work? _____

Are there times when I appear dejected or moody? When are these times? _____

Are there times when I want to be alone? When? _____

When do I seem at my best around other people? _____

What other general statements can you make about yourself when you look back over the adjective box? _____

I See Me As a Unique Person

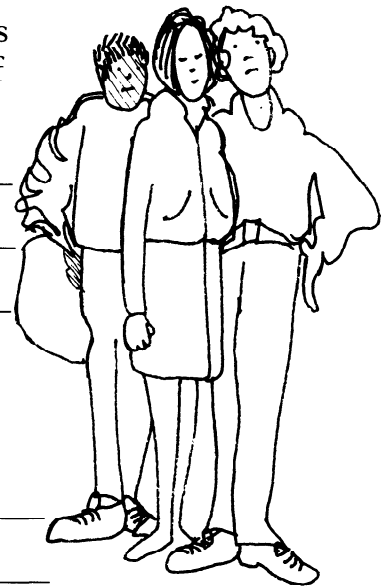
We are all unique. No person is exactly like any other person. Take a look at yourself and decide what special qualities make you unique. Perhaps it's your ability to do something athletically that others can't. Maybe it is your sense of humor or your ability to tell a good joke. You may be able to make others feel comfortable when you first meet them.

Look closely enough at yourself to see what makes you truly unique.

You may be larger or smaller than others in your class. Other than physical size, what are two or three physical things about you that make you different from other people?



You may be one of the mentally swiftest members of your class or among the less-rapid thinkers. No matter where you stand on the class mental ladder, there are things about your mind and the way you think that are different from all others in the class. Explain how your mind works in two or three ways that make you truly unique among the members of your class.



The way you look and dress adds to your uniqueness. Give two or three things about your appearance that set you apart from the crowd.

There's an old saying that tells us actions speak louder than words. In what ways do your actions help prove you are a totally unique individual?

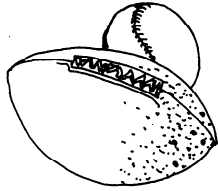
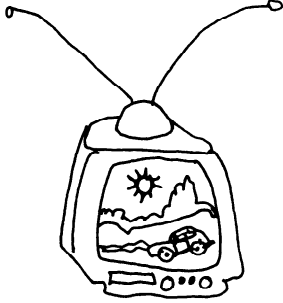
When you talk with friends, when you meet strangers, and when you encounter people you know, you act in ways that help you relate to people. Describe two or three ways you act toward people that help make you different from others.

Glance back over the things you have just discovered that help make you unique. What one thing about you is the most important when it comes to making you truly your own person who is different from all others?

Match Up

In the first part of this exercise, you will be looking only at yourself. Let's begin by considering some things you like and dislike.

List one item you like and another you dislike for each of the categories on the next page. Don't spend a lot of time worrying about your choices. Just try to pick one thing you really like and another you really dislike for each category.

		LIKE	DISLIKE
	Football team	_____	_____
	Car	_____	_____
	TV program	_____	_____
	Musical group	_____	_____
	Movie or TV actor or actress	_____	_____
	School subject	_____	_____
	Chore at home	_____	_____
	Food	_____	_____
	Color	_____	_____

To complete the first part of this project, think of some enjoyable experiences you have had. List two of the best experiences you have ever had.

Life isn't always fun. Not all experiences are enjoyable. List two things you have experienced that were not at all enjoyable. They probably were either frightening or sad.

Now for the second part of Match-Up. Get together with another person in the class to compare your responses. Keep track of the number of times the two of you agree on things you like and dislike. Then check to see if you share any experiences you both enjoyed or both found unenjoyable.

You'll probably discover that the two of you share some likes and dislikes. You'll also note you have different views on other points. This is to be expected.

You are unique because you are not entirely like anyone else. However, you have some of the same qualities as others.

If you wish, compare your ideas with more than one person in class. You may be surprised to discover that someone you know well lists different likes and dislikes than you expect.



The Perfect Me Place

Think about designing a room that would be absolutely perfect for you. It might be a bedroom with plenty of room for everything you'd like to have handy. Your perfect Me Place might be a den or library. It could be a workshop or laboratory filled with all the tools and equipment necessary to make the sorts of projects you'd love to construct.

Begin by deciding how large your perfect place would be. Write the dimensions along the outside of the box on the next page. If the shape given is not the perfect shape for what you are planning, use a pen and ruler to change the box to the shape you prefer.

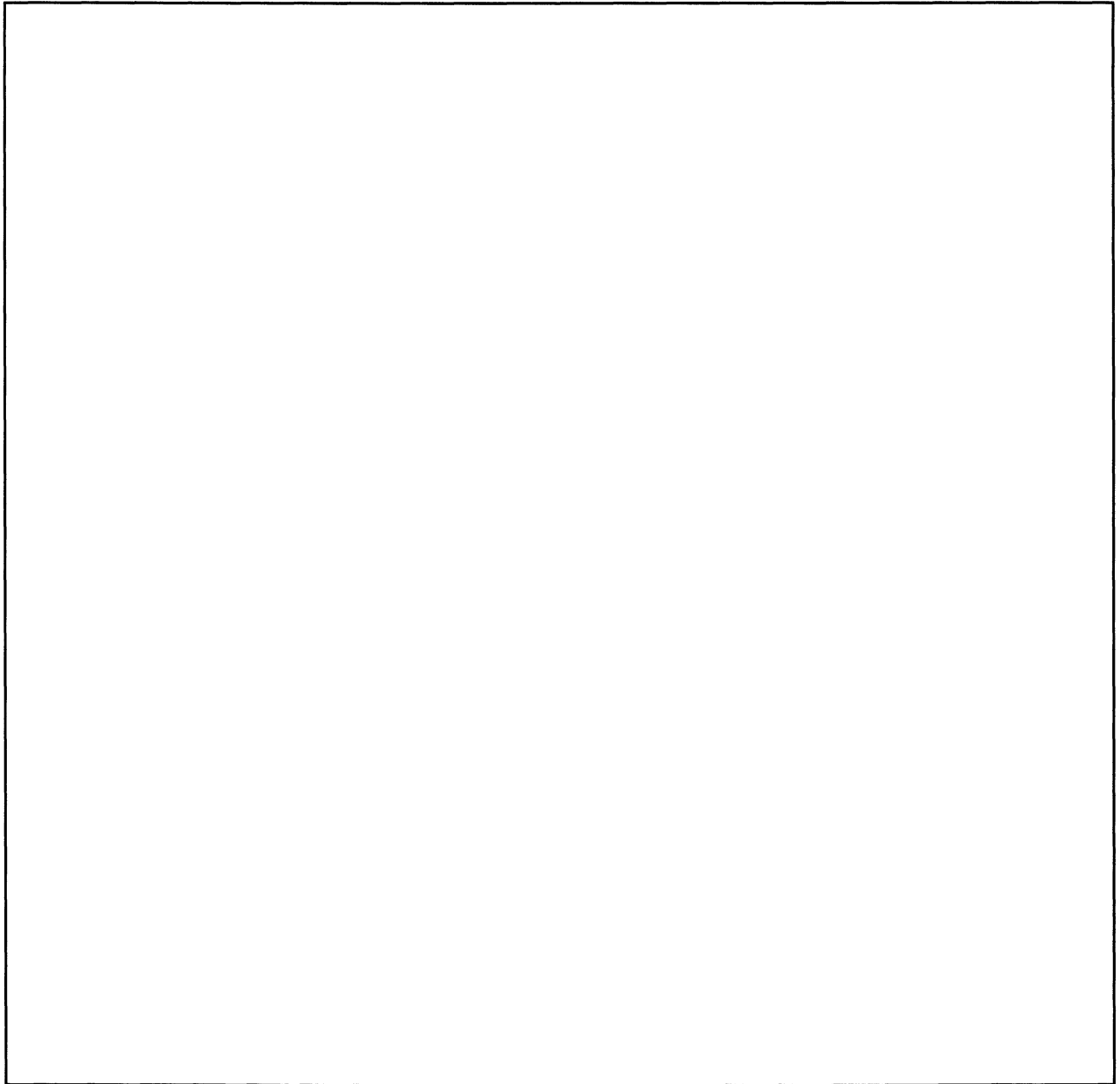


Decide where to place doors and windows and then locate them in the drawing. What pieces of furniture would you like to have in your perfect room?

Remember to design enough closet and storage space to hold all the things you have or would like to have.

Don't forget things such as a computer and perhaps a television set. Remember to include a CD player and stereo system if you wish.

Think about how to arrange your Me Place so that everything is exactly where it should be to make the location the perfect place for you.



I'm Proud of That



Taking pride in things you do and accomplish is an indication you've done well. There are probably many things you've done that cause you to feel proud.

There may be many more things that you should be proud about. It may surprise you to realize just how many things you should take pride in.

Let's take a close look at you and see if you can discover a number of things that should cause you to be proud of yourself.

Supply at least one example for each of the following statements. As you work on this exercise, you may be amazed at the variety of things of which you should be proud.

1. I am proud of something I am able to do on my own without help from adults.

2. I am proud of a new skill I recently learned.

3. At school I recently did something of which I am proud.

4. I made a decision that took a lot of thought but made me proud of myself.

5. Not too long ago I said something that still gives me pride.

6. I am proud of myself for a decision I made regarding money.

7. I am proud that I worked hard to overcome or change a habit or attitude.

8. Once I spoke out when I could have kept silent. Now I am proud that I did.

9. My family has a tradition of which I am really proud.

10. I'm proud that I finished a job that others might have given up on.

11. I am proud that I did something that helped someone else feel better.

12. I've done at least one thing I'm proud of that helps our ecology or environment.

13. I'm proud of a family member because of the way that person lives his or her life.

14. One time I did not go along with the group and I'm proud I did not.

15. I am proud that I've done something to make my community a better place in which to live.

16. I'm proud of myself for not saying something I considered saying.

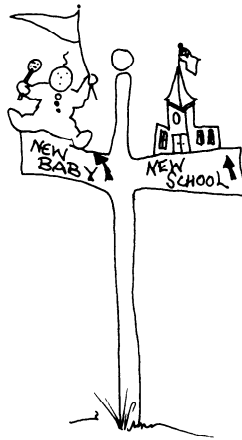
17. I wrote something which makes me proud.

18. I can take pride in something I made or helped build.

19. By helping my family I've done something of which I am proud.

20. I've done something to please myself that I take pride in.

New Directions



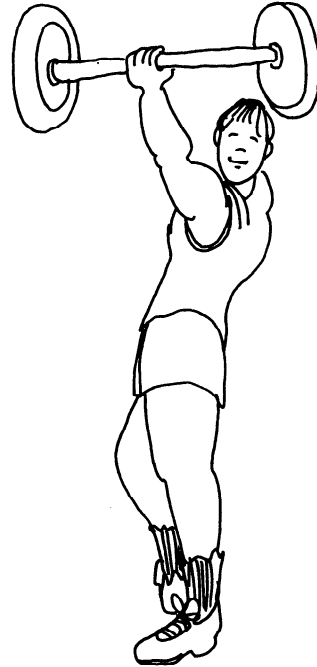
Certain events in our lives start us in a new direction. After we start in that new direction, our lives are changed forever. For example, when you started school your life took a new direction. The birth of a younger brother or sister gave you a new direction in life. Moving to a new community, meeting someone who became your special friend, or making a team are all examples of new directions your life may have taken.

Pick one new direction that has been important to your life. Write a short story about taking that new direction. Simply describe what happened and tell how you happened to be involved in taking that new direction. (Use the next page to continue your story.)

After taking a new direction, your life changes from the way it has been before. Sometimes the change is good. At other times such change may be bad.

In the space below, illustrate how your life changed because of the new direction you just wrote about. You may make one drawing or a series of drawings. If you don't feel you are a good artist, feel free to draw simple stick figures to illustrate this change.

Sometimes I'm Strong and Sometimes I'm Weak



We all have strengths and weaknesses. You know you're better at some things than at others. Begin by deciding whether each of the following is one of your strong points or is a weak area. Write an "S" after an item to show you are strong in that area. Write a "W" for those areas in which you are *weak*.

Art _____

Music _____

Sports _____

Reading _____

Science _____

Math _____

Spelling _____

Handwriting _____

English usage _____

Social studies _____

Now let's look at some personal traits. Use the same "S" and "W" rating system.

I try to be on time. _____

I'm well organized. _____

I pay attention. _____

I finish tasks. _____

I take care of my things. _____

I work on my own. _____

People can depend on me. _____

I take responsibility. _____

I am honest. _____

I exercise self-control. _____

What are your three most important strong points? Describe them. They may or may not be among those points you rated yourself on above.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Choose three things about yourself you would like to work on to change and make better. They don't have to be from the items you just rated.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Life Isn't Always Happy

There are times in life when you aren't happy. Sadness is part of living. Certain sounds and sights can cause you to be sad for a few seconds or a minute or two. Let's begin by checking to see what can cause you to have a bit of momentary sadness.

Complete the following statements:

1. I have a feeling of sadness when I hear the sound of _____ .
2. When I smell _____ I may feel sad.
3. I feel momentarily sad when I see _____ .
4. The feel of _____ can make me feel sad.

Things other than hearing, smelling, seeing, or feeling certain things can cause sadness. List other experiences that may cause you to feel sad for a time.

We all have events or days that stand out in our lives as being extremely sad. Sometimes the things that caused sadness happened to us or to members of our families. At times the events or experiences touched someone we knew. Learning about the divorce of your best friend's parents can make you sad, so can finding out someone you know has AIDS.



Decide on what was one of the saddest events or days in your life. Write a short story about that event or day.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

It's Great to Be Happy

Nearly everyone agrees it is more fun to be happy than to be sad. It can be said we appreciate happy times more because of the sad times we have had.

There are certain sights and sounds that you associate with happiness. Let's start by having you recall some things that usually make you happy.



Complete these statements:

1. Whenever I hear the sound of _____ ,
I find myself feeling happy.
2. The scent of _____ causes me to be happy.
3. The taste of _____ makes me happy.
4. I feel happy when I see _____ .

Naturally, other things nearly always trigger a feeling of happiness for you. Tell about some other things that make you feel happy.

It is fun to remember happy times and pleasant experiences. If you were going to choose the single most happy time or experience in your life, what would it be? Write a description of the happiest day or event in your life.



How I Deal with My Anger

It is perfectly normal to become angry from time to time. The important thing is not to allow anger to get out of control.

Not everyone becomes angry about the same things. What may cause one person to become extremely angry may only cause another a shake of the head and a weary smile.



What are three things that cause you to become extremely upset or angry?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

People deal with anger in different ways. Some of us shout and wave our arms when we are angry. Others become absolutely silent. Some people try to hold their anger in, while others let everyone know how upset they are.

How do you handle your anger? What do you do and say when you are very upset?

Becoming angry is different from losing your temper. You can be angry but remain under control. Loss of temper is also a loss of some of your self-control. What can cause you to lose your temper?



We all have said and done things we later wish had never happened. Often anger causes events like this. Think back to one time you became angry and let your anger cause you to do or say something you now wish had not happened.

Write a short account of what caused you to become so angry at that time. Tell what you did or said as a result of your anger. Finish your account by suggesting how you might have better handled the problem.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

A Letter to Me

In this chapter you have taken a close look at yourself. You should have a good idea of how you see yourself. You are aware of things you like and things that bother you. You have thought about what makes you happy or sad and things in which you can take pride.

As you've thought about the projects in this chapter, you have considered how you might change or improve. You have also brought to mind some really good things you've done.

Even though you probably were not always completely pleased with yourself, you did discover something extremely important. You have looked at yourself and found that you are a good person. Most likely you thought about some things you really like about yourself.

You're going to finish this chapter by writing a letter about yourself to yourself. It's a letter from you to you. Tell yourself what you've found out about you. Tell what you value about yourself and what you've discovered that you truly like about you.