

Your Self-Concept—Who am I?

Who you believe you are, or your self-concept, is a picture you have created about yourself.

Your brain, as you have learned, is a protection mechanism for you. It's designed to look for danger and to move you away from it. It does this by using your senses to record what it sees, hears, smells, touches and tastes. Primarily your brain uses what it hears and sees to develop your self-concept.

When it hears "You're so shy" in one way or another 234 times from the time you were age 5 to



18, you can understand how your brain developed the self-concept belief "I am a shy person" that you have been living with and operating by your entire adult life! Just think of all your other self-concept beliefs. Beliefs about your athletic ability, musical talents, writing and verbal ability, and learning ability. Beliefs about your body and inclination toward being overweight or catching illnesses. Your beliefs about your likes and dislikes about food, music, clothes, TV programs, politics, religion, sports, movies, housework, cooking and hundreds of other things! Your beliefs about your personality like "I'm a quiet person" or "I'm a giver".

These types of beliefs compromise your **outer self-concept** of who you are. It's a description of, or the ingredient list of, the physical you that you see when you look in the mirror.

Let's look closely at all these self-descriptors that are your outer self-concept. Where did they come from? Mostly they were given to you by other adults long before you had any say in the matter. Our brains are designed to believe that if something happened yesterday, it will happen tomorrow or 10 years from now. If a hot stove burned your hand yesterday, it will burn your hand today and 10 years from now. So when someone tells you in the 1st grade "you're just not a good writer" your brain is designed to believe it today and 10 years from now! Your brain thinks: Why go through the pain of trying to become a good writer, it's so much easier just to say "I'm not a good writer" and stay comfortable. But there is more than one #1 best-selling author who had someone in their early life tell them "you're not a good writer" but instead chose to ignore that belief given to them and believed by their brain as "the truth", and decided instead to listen to their inner self.

Your outer self-concept is produced from your brain's programmed beliefs about you

Your inner self-concept

There is also an inner self-concept that comes from the “you” you can’t see in the mirror that most of us miss for this very reason. It’s the “you” that looks out from behind your eyes. It’s the invisible entity “you” we call spirit or soul. Your inner self-concept is your belief in whether you see yourself as a smart animal on the planet or a special being connected to a higher creative power. We can take away all your body and its tissue, bones and organs and “you” still exist in an invisible form of energy that is connected back to the energy that created you. This “you” is hard to believe in and live by, because we can’t see, hear or touch it like your brain needs to prove existence. But billions of people agree to its existence because all the world’s religions are based on this inner invisible definition of you!

Who am I?

A good way to wrap your mind around your self-concept is to define who you are by what is real. A great spiritual sage said: “What is real is changeless”. So a better question to ask yourself to get a more accurate definition of your self-concept would be: “Who am I REALLY?” Your body changes so you can’t define yourself by your body. Your personality and moods change daily, so you can’t define yourself by your personality. Your talents change, so you can’t define yourself by your talents or skills. Truly, every one of your outer self-concept beliefs can change and thus are not real!

What is real is that which never changes

The only thing that never changes is the “you” who you really are—a changeless, formless energy that is your conscious self! This is the energy or spirit that powers the machine called your body which contains a brain that produces thoughts.

Once you believe you are not just your body and brain, but a spiritual energy connected to a higher power, you open up yourself to a huge new world of possibility! You no longer see your “I am just born to be fat” or “I just can’t control my eating” beliefs produced by your brain as the truth. When you see your “I am” as a higher self, you operate by a core belief that you are more than just a smart monkey. You believe you are a spirit in a body that allows you to have a human experience on this planet.

Why is this important?

When you begin to define your self-concept by your inner self, you begin the essential process of disengaging from your natural “who am I” self-concept information coming from your brain’s insistence that the past = future—always has, always will. Your brain sends you this immobilizing information in boat-loads because that’s its job—to assimilate experiences to formulate beliefs that if you didn’t like green beans last week, you won’t like them today and you won’t like them 10 years from now! This is how we “learn” everything from how to type to how deal with an insult. So we can’t expect our brain to give us thoughts anything other than thoughts about who you were in the past is who you are now and who you will be 10 years from now.....heavily tainted with doubt, fear and worst-case scenarios! In other words, if you keep listening to your brain, you will NEVER move your life forward! The reason why 90% of all weight loss programs fail isn’t because the program wasn’t good enough, it’s because everybody keeps listening to and believing the thoughts produced by their brain!



Alternatively, when you start living in the knowledge that your brain is just a part of your body that is always changing and therefore not “real”, you tune in to a new station called “the real you”. This station broadcasts from the inner you that you know exists, but only briefly at funerals, church or special times alone do you FEEL it’s presence in your life. Listening to this new station that does not associate the past

with the future allows you to recreate your life no matter what happened in your past! To the *real you*, having abusive parents and a horrible educational experience doesn’t mean your destiny is to be overweight or work in a job you detest. To the *real you*, it doesn’t matter if you were taught poor eating habits, you can learn new ones. To the *real you*, it doesn’t matter if you were laughed at in gym class 35 years ago or have always believed you were clumsy and uncoordinated, you can become a personal trainer. It doesn’t matter if you disliked green beans ever since you were a kid, to the *real you*, you can start enjoying and loving healthy foods. It doesn’t matter that you didn’t want to go exercise in a gym because you thought everyone would think you’re fat, the *real you* doesn’t fear disapproval from others or let others’ opinions stand in your way.

Infinite and Limitless

The inner you is connected to all creation so it by definition must be infinite and limitless. You are the same energy as any other human being. I know it's hard to believe in yourself as "infinite and limitless" when you're struggling to pay the bills, keep your kids out of trouble, and keep your marriage together. I understand that it seems much more *real* to believe your



brain's thoughts that keep telling you that what you are is what you were, and what you'll always be, because the proof is all around you! But remember, your brain only believes what it sees. **You can see what you believe!** You have something no animal has—an imagination that sees potential and believes in greater and better things. Your thinking (not your brain's) is always thinking better and forward, never backward.

Your thinking (not your brain's) is limitless. To prove this to yourself, remember *your* thoughts when you were in a 5 year-old body, before your brain was programmed with all the limiting beliefs given to you from others? You could fly, you could be President, you could be a dancer, you could be a doctor! Your thoughts were expressions of exploration, creativity, contribution, love and play. **This proves the true limitless nature of your REAL thinking!** Growing up, you just learned to disbelieve it ("get real") and believe the limiting past = the future thoughts produced by your brain instead.

Only when you purposefully turn your attention away from your brain's constant output of thoughts that define you as your past, and focus your attention on the thoughts that come from the real you that is connected to the creator of all which is infinite and limitless, can you unlock yourself from the chains that have held you back from your true and real potential.

It's all in what you choose to believe—the outer you with the limits placed on you by others and echoed by your own voice, or the limitless you that is the real you connected to the infinite power of your creator? I know what I'm choosing!

ASSIGNMENT

Understanding that your brain's natural tendency is to believe that the past = the future explains why your beliefs become your identity. Do you understand WHY your brain would want to believe that if it happened yesterday, it will happen tomorrow or 10 years from now? Please write in your own words, your understanding of this important understanding:

Understanding that the self-definitions you have been holding as "who I am" are just your brain's beliefs and are not coming from the real you is life-changing and just plain exciting! Write down several of the self-concept beliefs that you know now can change.

Examples: I used to believe that "I" hated green beans, but I now know that the *real me* can like any food that is healthy. I used to believe that "I" was just "an eater", but I now know that the *real me* can control what I eat and when I eat.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
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- 6.
- 7.

Write your thoughts about what the benefits would be of seeing yourself as a spirit having a human experience in a body rather than seeing yourself as your body with a spirit.