



# REFLECTION ESSAY SAMPLE

Who am I? What am I like? What do I think of myself? In the period of childhood and early adolescence, children themselves ask these questions by asking for answers that would help them to get to know themselves better. The concept of self is a mental image, complete and organized. It is, therefore, about the evaluation of self and the subjective experience of one's self. The importance of self-image is reflected in the psychological and social functioning of a person manifested through different behaviors. It is known that experiencing oneself as successful or unsuccessful persons, accepted or unaccepted, loved or unhappy, happy or unhappy, etc., affects the formation of a successful or unsuccessful identity, and accordingly the functioning of a person in everyday life situations, establishing relationships with others, ways of solving problems, ways of satisfying their own and other needs, achieving happiness, etc.. It determines how important an individual will be to consider events in life, how to approach the problem solving, whether he will be happy with what he is doing and how he will cope with stress.

Since the development of a positive image of itself is a very important process for each individual, many psychologists have decided to deal with this aspect of development that is full of stimulating and interesting issues. In traditional psychology there is a division of the notion of self into two different: "I" (the existential notion of self) and "me" (the empirical notion of self). "I" is a relationship of consciousness about oneself and one's own existence, experiencing one's own personality, abilities and existence. The existential concept of self is a subjective perception of one's own being that lives and exists in time. On the other hand, the term "me" consists of features that are unambiguous and refer to an objective understanding of an individual. It includes the physical appearance, social status, cognitive abilities, personality traits, etc.

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The existential and empirical notion of self together form a complete picture of self-evolving life. The concept of self is very complex and no matter how true it is, it follows the individual throughout his life in the field of physical and mental functioning. Although there are different definitions of this concept, it is mostly reduced in a way that someone thinks of himself or of the personal perception of himself. The development of self-awareness begins in the period of infancy, and its peak is felt in adolescence.

The phases that are the invariable sequence, do not include regression, are consistent through different problems and situations, are universal to all cultures and are developed according to the child's cognitive maturity. Five stages of developing self-awareness: 1. Level 0 (infancy): The child is aware of the physical but not the psychological existence. It does not distinguish between physical behavior such as laughter and emotion that is then experienced. 2. Level 1 (Early Childhood): The child distinguishes between physical behavior and mental state. He also considers that external appearance and behavior are the direct consequence of thoughts and feelings. Level 2 (middle childhood): The child understands that behavior does not have to be directly derived from inner thoughts and feelings, i.e. understand how "I" can hide certain behaviors from others, but not by itself. 4. Level 3 (Preadolescence): In this period, children believe that each individual can evaluate his inner "I" by using the action of the mind that is separate of what is being perceived. 5. Level 4 (adolescence): In the final phase, adolescents realize that "I" is not fully recognizable, that is, some parts of it remain in an unconscious level that is unreachable. Selman's model is one of the most intuitive explanations of childhood awareness, and is based on extensive interviews with children. The questions that Selman has set up for children are focused on childhood awareness and thinking about oneself. This model represents a starting point for studying and understanding the process of developing a concept of self. The concept of self evolves from recognizing oneself in the mirror (bodies, exteriors) through acquainting their own abilities, qualities and interests to the stage in which a person understands how the process of getting to know themselves never ends.

It is considered that the concept of itself has three dimensions of equal importance and mutual dependence, namely knowledge of oneself, expectations of oneself and self-evaluation. Knowledge about oneself (really "me") refers to the qualities that an individual truly possesses. It encompasses our own knowledge of what we are, where we are successful or unsuccessful, whether we are happy or unhappy and what we would like to change. If we do not see ourselves as we are in reality, it is difficult to be able to become what it would be like to be.

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Despite imperfections, it is important to accept oneself. 2. Expectations of self (expected and ideal "I") refer to what we might be, or what we expect from ourselves. These dimensions can appear in two forms: "Ideally I" (what I would like to be) and "Expected I" (what I should be, regarding the fulfillment of obligations and duties). 3. Valuing yourself involves evaluating its attributes as compared to the characteristics of others and considering the feedback received from the environment (praise, criticism, commentary) and is developing into a consciousness of self-esteem. Self-esteem therefore consists of knowledge of one's own characteristics, self-assessment and emotional reaction on that. Disagreements between what we are and what we would like to be or what we think we should be leading to the development of negative emotions. Negative emotions ultimately result in a negative image of self and low self-esteem. If the concepts of yourself ("real" and "expected / desired I") overlap the result is a pleasure. . Disobedience to the "real self" and the "expected self" leads to social anxiety. Disobedience to "real self" and "ideal self" results in depression. Social anxiety and depression disturbances are preventing the development of a positive image of oneself. If the concepts of self-overpopulation, the individual will feel pleasure. Higgins' theory serves the purpose of understanding certain emotional disorders such as anxiety and depression. If your own picture does not match your personal dreams, emotional discomfort comes. People suffering from depression passively accept the situation and are regularly followed by feelings of sadness and depression. In cases where the "real" and "expected ones" do not coincide, individuals are used by self-indulgence - proactive behavior undertaken to influence others' perception of success or failure. Self-help is sought to avoid anxiety characterized by feelings of tension, fear, anxiety and worry, and insomnia and physical health problems. By recognizing signs that point to some of the aforementioned disturbances that result from the disagreement between the "real self" and the "expected self" or the "real self" and the "ideal self" can influence the causes and improve the quality of life of an individual. In order for an individual to achieve satisfaction with himself, correction of behavior or own perception is needed.

High self-esteem is considered a desirable feature in most cultures. Individuals with high self-esteem feel themselves successful, worthy, have no fear of failure, and generally have their own price, while individuals with low self-esteem have a bad image of themselves, are dissatisfied with themselves and are overly self-critical, often without objective reasons. Knowing about self-esteem is important for the daily functioning of people and has led researchers to increasingly question the influence of self-esteem on different aspects of life.