

THE "WHO AM I?" EXERCISE

This exercise is designed to help you develop self-awareness and to discover more aspects of your true self. It is based on the assumption that each of us, like an onion, has various layers covering a central core. These layers of self-perceptions may be positive or negative. They represent different aspects of our personality and of our relationship to the world. Some of the layers may be like a facade, or mask, hiding those aspects of ourselves we do not like, some may be those disliked aspects themselves, and still some others may be those hidden and very positive aspects we have trouble accepting as well. Layers of survival mechanisms, essential qualities, unique attributes and personality traits all live within us and within each of us lies a deep center which is vibrant and creative—our self, the innermost essence of our being. This is the content-less center of awareness and will on which much of psychosynthesis theory and work is based. The "Who Am I?" exercise leads one gently to that self, through successive attempts to respond to the question. Eventually, one can touch, in this way, the source of one's being, one's true identity.

Procedure

1. Select a place where you are quiet and undisturbed. Take a sheet of paper, write the date at the top, and title the page "*Who Am I?*". Then write your answer to this question as freely and honestly as possible, giving yourself time to pause periodically and in silence ask the question again.
2. Sit in a relaxed position. Close your eyes. Clear your mind. Then ask yourself the "*Who Am I?*" question again and this time look for a response in the form of an image in your mind's eye. Don't try to think or reason, but simply let an image emerge. When you are ready, open your eyes, and draw or color what you saw, in as much detail as possible, and allow yourself to write, as well, about any feelings you had about the image and what it meant to you.
3. Stand up with some room around you to move in. Close your eyes and again ask "*Who Am I?*". And this time let the response come through movement in your body. Trust its wisdom and let the movement unfold until you sense a completion. You may also want to include sounds in this response, or singing. You could also move to a favorite piece of music. When you are ready, write about your experience.

It is recommended that you continue to do this exercise over a period of time. Its impact deepens with repeated use.