

ISSUE 14

Who Is the Real You?

When we look in the mirror each morning, we like to squint a bit to soften the image a bit. But to know and understand oneself is the first step to a successful life. Everybody has his or her strong and weak points, and we might as well admit it. Then we can concentrate on improving on our weaknesses and emphasizing our strengths. Otherwise, we will go through life wondering why we aren't accomplishing more.

Describe yourself by choosing one from each of the following pairs.

- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| (1) Friendly | Reticent |
| (2) Self-reliant | Dependent |
| (3) Impulsive | Calculating |
| (4) Optimistic | Pessimistic |
| (5) Conservative | Liberal |
| (6) Outgoing | Shy |
| (7) Adventurous | Staid |
| (8) Humorous | Humorless |
| (9) Leader | Follower |
| (10) Spendthrift | Tightwad |
| (11) Forgiving | Vengeful |
| (12) Social | Reclusive |
| (13) Idealistic | Realistic |
| (14) Modest | Boastful |
| (15) Law-abiding | Anarchic |



Sample Answers

(A)

This is hard! Sometimes neither choice is quite right. For instance, with my close friends I'm very outgoing and friendly, but I'm usually a bit shy and reticent among strangers. Which is the real me?

(B)

I'm definitely the Leader type. I guess that *fits* my other choices such as Self-Reliant, Realistic, and Social. But I wonder, am I really Boastful? I know I'm not *falsely* Modest very often, but I would prefer to describe myself as Honest rather than Boastful. But this list sure does give me a lot to think about in my *self-evaluation*.

Speak Your Mind

1. Who do you think knows you the best? Why?
2. What makes you the proudest of yourself?
3. What makes you the most disappointed with yourself?
4. List three things you should change to improve yourself.
5. A sense of humor is often considered important for *fostering* better relationships with others. Why?

→ *fit* : be appropriate or right for (sth)

→ *falsely* : not really

→ *self-evaluation* (*self-assessment*) : analysis of oneself or one's actions and attitudes

→ *foster* : help (sth) to grow or develop

Speak Your Mind

Speak Your Mind Helpers

5. A sense of humor is often considered important for fostering better relationships with others. Why?

M : Do you think I'm humorless?

F : Sometimes, maybe, but usually you see the funny side of things. I don't think you take life or yourself too seriously, but you aren't irresponsible either.

M : I'm glad to hear you say that. Lately, people seem to think that I'm too *tense*. I guess maybe I'm working too hard.

F : We all need to relax sometimes. But maybe even more important: we need to be able to get others to relax with us. If being with us makes everyone else feel nervous, no one will want to be in our presence, and we'll never have close friends.

M : That's true. But if someone's always a clown and is constantly the life of the party, lots of people may want to be with that person, but they won't take him very seriously. He'll be more like a pet poodle than anything else.

F : It's not just acting silly and telling jokes well that *matters*. Having a good sense of humor means being able to accept *setbacks* as part of life and not *getting down* about the bad things. A smile is always a better solution than suicide.

M : But sometimes we need to do the hard work to succeed, even if it is not all fun and games. A pleasant *mediocrity* is still just a mediocrity. I don't see how anyone can be *content* with laughing at his or her own failures — it's not funny!

F : But people who can't laugh at their own *absurdities* can never overcome them. We all need to realize how imperfect we are and then do the best we can. If we fail sometimes, people won't think worse of us for it, and when we succeed they won't *resent* us. In either case, we'll be much happier about it.

-*tense* : feeling very nervous and worried

-*matter* : be important

-*setback* : problem that delays or stops progress or makes a situation worse

-*get down* : start feeling sad and/or losing hope

-*mediocrity* : quality, ability, or achievement that is average or below

-*content* : happy and satisfied

-*absurdity* : state of being ridiculous or wildly unreasonable

-*resent* : feel angry at

M : You seem to have thought this through pretty thoroughly.

F : Well, I guess it's because I've fallen down enough times to realize that it hurts too much if I can't laugh about it at the time.

