Self-Concept Worksheet

Name: __________________________________________

1. (10 points.) How do you perceive yourself? Who are you? Write about yourself in the space below. Spend at least 5 minutes “free writing” about who you think you are.

Self-concept is based on belief rather than on fact. Your self-concept does not necessarily correspond with external reality – others may “see” you differently. What you believe about yourself is true for you. It will be a powerful factor in determining your behavior. For example, if you believe you are inferior to others, you will probably act in a self-defeating fashion. If you believe you are strong and resilient, you will likely succeed, even against great odds. Your self-concept can help or hinder you.
2. Review your self-description on the previous page. Identify three qualities you feel are your greatest strengths and two qualities you feel are your most serious weaknesses.

(3 points) Three greatest strengths:

1. ______________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________
3. ______________________________________________

(2 points) Two most serious weaknesses:

1. ______________________________________________
2. ______________________________________________

Many people cling to their collections of beliefs about themselves – even when facts and feedback from others contradict what they believe about themselves. Self-concept beliefs are sometimes based on out-of-date perceptions that we hold about ourselves. For example, if you were a below average student in high school, how many good grades will it take in college to revise your perception about your academic ability? Many adult students report that they are surprised by their college successes. Out-of-date perceptions can work in the other direction also. For example, how many former high school athletes injure themselves when they try to do things at age 40 that they could do at age 16?

3. Which self-concept beliefs do you cling to despite feedback to the contrary? Think of one of your self-concept beliefs that may be out of date and write it down.

(1 point) Out-of-date self-concept belief #1:

(1 point) How and why I have revised (or should revise) this belief:

Sometimes our self-beliefs prevent us from reaching our potential. For example, if you think you are less qualified for a job than another candidate, you may not even apply for the job. Or, if you worry about your ability to speak in public, you may refuse a promotion or nomination to an officer’s position in an organization.

4. (2 points) Think about how your self-beliefs may be holding you back. List a self-belief that may be keeping you from reaching your potential and explain how it limits you.

Self-talk can be positive or negative. Although we may not be aware of it, our mind is constantly communicating with itself. This intrapersonal communication (i.e. self-talk) can be productive,
especially if we replace negative self-talk with positive affirmations. For example, replacing this negative self-talk: “I hope I don’t forget what I want to say during my presentation” with a positive affirmation such as this: “I am well-prepared and I have practiced.” Or the negative: “If I’m lucky, my boss will like this idea” with the much more positive: “This is a good idea; it will work.”

5. Pay attention to your own self-talk for a day. Make a conscious effort to replace negative messages with positive affirmations. Below, give three examples of negative self-talk and list the positive affirmation you used (or could use) to replace the negative self-talk.

(1 point) Negative self-talk example #1:

(1 point) Positive affirmation:

(1 point) Negative self-talk example #2:

(1 point) Positive affirmation:

(1 point) Negative self-talk example #3

(1 point) Positive affirmation:

Self-concept comes from many sources. The people in your life have a huge influence on you and your self-concept. The things others have said about you – positive and negative – over the years affect your image of yourself. The conclusions you draw from the things others have said make a lasting impression on how you feel about your intelligence, talent, skills, achievements, etc. Think about these influences on your self-concept.

6. (1 point) What one person has had the greatest impact on the way you are today? Explain.

7. (1 point) How did you choose your career or area of study? When did you realize you had talent or ability in this area? What do you think influenced your decision?

8. (1 point) What do people tell you that you are good at? Do you agree? Why or why not.
9. (1 point) Are there areas of your life in which you “play a victim” by blaming someone or something else for what is happening in your life? Why or why not?

10. (1 point) What do you like about your appearance? Is there anything you would change if you could?

Jonathan Robinson describes the Mosquito Principle in his book, Instant Insight: Two Hundred Ways to Create the Life You Really Want. In brief, this is the Mosquito Principle: You are on a picnic with people you love. The scenery is gorgeous and the food is delicious. However, a mosquito buzzes around your head, making it impossible to enjoy the people, the food or the occasion. The principle is that your life is only as good as the worst thing in your life. Since the worst thing in your life is the thing that gets your attention, it’s necessary to improve the worst thing before you can focus on the good, better, best … i.e. improving the taste of the dinner (which is already delicious) won’t make as big a difference as getting rid of the mosquito.

11. (5 points) Briefly explain a mosquito – i.e. the worst thing – in your life. How might you get rid of this mosquito?