“There are three things extremely hard. Steel, a diamond, and to know one’s self.”  
- Benjamin Franklin

Components of the Self:

Affect-

Behavior-

Cognition-

I. Self-concept

A. Definition = beliefs or thoughts you have about yourself and can communicate to other people

B. Sources of self-knowledge
   1. Introspection
      a. Definition = looking inward to examine thoughts, feelings, and motives

      b. Doesn’t always work...
2. Self-Perceptions

a. Self-perception theory (Bem, 1967) – people look to their behavior to determine their thoughts, attitudes, emotions, and motivations

b. Only happens if:

c. Self-perceptions of behavior

d. Self-perceptions of attitudes

e. Self-perceptions of emotions

f. Self-perceptions of motivation

1. People look to the situation in which a behavior occurs to determine why they are engaging in that behavior (i.e., their motivations)

2. Types of motivation

   • Intrinsic motivation – motivation from within the self

   • Extrinsic motivation – motivation from the environment
3. Other people
   a. Social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) - people compare themselves to others in order to gain information about the self

II. Self-esteem
   A. Definition = positive or negative self-evaluations
   B. Is having high self-esteem always good?

   C. Sociometer hypothesis:
III. Self Behaviors

A. A self-enhancement motive often drives people’s behaviors...

B. Self-serving biases - tendency to blame failures on external events but to take credit for successes

C. Other self-serving cognitions

D. Other biases

1. False consensus - overestimating the extent to which others agree with our opinions

2. Unrealistic optimism - overestimating the likelihood of good events happening and underestimating the likelihood of bad events happening
3. Unrealistically positive self-views - tendency to think of oneself as above average at everything

E. Self-handicapping - creating obstacles to performance in order to have an excuse if failure occurs

F. Downward comparisons - comparing ourselves to less fortunate others

G. Basking in Reflected Glory (BIRGing) - associating with successful or famous others
The self as a limited resource (Baumeister and others, 1998)

Ego depletion: a temporary reduction in the self’s capacity or willingness to engage in volitional action caused by prior exercise of volition.

Control condition-

Depletion condition-

Non-depletion condition-

DVs: