

Becoming *Aware*

A Text/Workbook for
Human Relations & Personal Adjustment

13th
Edition



Katie Barwick-Snell
Velma Walker

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Becoming Aware

A Text/Workbook for
Human Relations & Personal Adjustment

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Edition

A photograph showing a large number of hands of various skin tones arranged in a circle, palms facing up. Each hand has a positive affirmation written on it in black marker. The affirmations include: "I will overcome", "I am important", "I will succeed", "I matter", "I have purpose", "I know who I am", "I am worthy", "I deserve a chance", "I am enough", "I am hopeful", "I am worthy and happy", "I am enough", "My life counts", "I am worthy", "I believe in myself", "I am grateful", and "I am important".

Katie Barwick-Snell
Velma Walker

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Transition House, Inc., is a private non-profit organization founded in 1982 in Norman, OK. Our Vision is changing lives by creating pathways for mental wellness. Our Mission is improving our community by providing tools for sustaining mental wellness with skills development, supportive care, and advocacy. The hands in the cover photo are of people who are working to overcome a disease that society often sees as a character flaw. We are so proud of the People of Transition House and their commitment to recovery from mental illness. Transition House Executive Director-Bonnie Peruttzi MHR and Mary Hopkins MHR, LPC and the University of Oklahoma Department of Human Relations-Dr. Katie Barwick-Snell are collaborating on a Wellness class for college students to learn more about Wellness issues that impact college students. It has been a great success for the last 3 semesters! For more on Transition House visit www.thouse.org.

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Preface

You will discover that the new thirteenth edition of *Becoming Aware: A Text/Workbook for Human Relations and Personal Adjustment* will assist you in the process of becoming more aware of yourself and others through the most interactive learning process you have found in any textbook.

This new edition is a text/workbook that will give students the opportunity to become active learners in the process of learning about human relations and personal adjustment. Learning should be a “hands on” experience. This new edition will help students explore, experiment, test, and apply the scholarly theories and ideas within the world of human relations and personal adjustment. This text/workbook will allow the learner to think critically, work through problems logically, and make connections with the real world and thus become an active learner. The more you become actively involved within the subject matter of human relations and personal adjustment, the more you will learn. This new edition will give you and the students within the class many new opportunities to get actively involved in learning about yourself and others.

*The art of
teaching is the
art of assisting
discovery.*
—MARK VAN
DOREN

About the Book

The approach in *Becoming Aware* is humanistic and personal; that is, it stresses the healthy and effective personality and the common struggles we all have in developing a greater awareness of self and establishing more meaningful relationships with others. It especially emphasizes taking risks in accepting personal responsibility for achieving a greater awareness of self and deciding whether and how we want to change our life.

What is more important to us than our personal adjustment and our relationships with other people? This new edition is written for college students of all ages and for all others who wish to explore the world of self-awareness and discover new avenues for personal growth and adjustment and the development and continuance of personal relationships.

The book was written for students who were looking for a practical course: one that dealt with issues in everyday living and would also provide a catalyst for their own

personal growth. *Becoming Aware* has been adopted in courses dealing with the psychology of adjustment, human relations, applied psychology, personal growth and awareness, communication, etc. It has also been fortunate to have had numerous adoptions from technical and vocational programs, ranging from nursing to electronics. In addition, instructors in teacher-training courses as well as management-development courses have found *Becoming Aware* a practical guide for their students.

Organization of This Edition

This is a personal interactive book. Within each chapter, the reader is encouraged to examine scholarly, relevant ideas and issues pertaining to their understanding of self and their relationships with others. This is information and skills that are highly sought after in the workplace.

This book is designed to be a personal workbook as well as a classroom text. Each chapter has a minimum of five activities for the reader to pause and reflect on the personal application of the concepts and theories presented in the chapter. Most of the activities will allow the reader to get personally and individually involved in completing the tasks, while a few of the activities will require each person to get involved in a small group process in order to complete the task. It is important for all students to participate in individual projects as well as group activities to retain the knowledge learned. In today's world of business we all have to learn to function as a team (within groups) and as individuals. The better we learn to do it now, the better we will survive in the world.

Active learning is emphasized throughout the text. Each chapter contains a Learning Journal, which will allow the reader to write and assess the personal value or meaning gained from the concepts presented. The activities, as well as the Learning Journals, have perforated pages, specifically designed for more convenient classroom participation in work outside of class that can be used for evaluation and assessment. Additionally, there are numerous thought-provoking quotations, from well-known sources, and over 25 short poems and words of wisdom designed to further promote insightful awareness.

The learning process is an important aspect of this book. The reader gets more involved within the subject matter of the text through the use of chapter test review questions, which will allow the student to relate directly to the important concepts and ideas within each chapter. Reflection questions are designed to help students to develop critical thinking skills and work through problems logically.

To emphasize the need for critical thinking skills, many of the important concepts and ideas are highlighted through use of elements titled—"Think about This"—"Check This Out"—"Consider This"—and "How To."

The sociocultural perspective within the field of human relations and personal adjustment is having a much greater impact on our lives, and it needs to be emphasized more and more. There is continued emphasis on diversity, including additional information on ethnicity, along with culture and gender. You will note the continued emphasis on the elements titled “Focus on Diversity” and “Gender and You.”

What's New in This Edition?

The thirteenth edition of *Becoming Aware* reflects significant updating. Each chapter has been extensively reviewed and updated. New current references, updated glossary terms, and interesting quotations have been added. An engaging new PowerPoint presentation designed to enhance discussion and encourage critical thinking has been developed. You will find new or additional information in the following areas:

- * Web-based activities added in selected chapters and updated websites for all chapters.
- * Several revised chapter activities and new chapter activities.
- * New section: What is human relations?
- * New coverage of tolerance, acceptance, and appreciation of differences.
- * Broadened discussion of Johari Window to include five dominant patterns of relationships.
- * Discussion of gender identity.
- * Expanded importance of self-concept with mindset discussion.
- * Extended discussion of the Big Five Personality Factors, with the addition of the HEXACO model.
- * Enhanced discussion of the Myers Briggs type psychology.
- * Increased discussion of strengths-based psychology.
- * New Gender and You discussion—Where Did You Learn Your Gender?
- * New section: A look at social psychology.
- * New discussion of cyberbullying.
- * Revamped presentation of guilt and shame.
- * Expanded section on helping people grieve with introduction of the Ring Theory.
- * New Focus on Diversity: Microaggressions.
- * Modernized discussion of technology and communication.
- * New discussion of the concept of implicit bias.
- * Strengthened discussion of becoming friends with the addition of friendship traits.
- * Updated discussion of Internet dating and social networking.
- * Broadened discussion of “Should I remain single?”
- * New activity: “Take the Marriage Quiz.”
- * Increased discussion of realities of conflict.
- * New information on mistakes to avoid in a conflict.

- * New discussion on cross-cultural relationships.
- * Updated information on millennials and their stress.
- * Revamped discussion of physical effects of stress.
- * Revised tips on managing stress.
- * Expanded discussion on the nature of prejudice.
- * Howard's seven-step method of values clarification.
- * Updated discussion of honesty/ethics in professions.
- * Steps for intelligent-risk taking.
- * Expanded discussion on why goal setting is important.
- * New coverage of tips for happiness.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the reviewers for their insightful suggestions and innovative ideas: Dr. Barwick-Snell: Thank you to Dr. Joanna Harris, Psychology, East Central Oklahoma University; Dr. Sharon Baker, University of Tulsa; Dr. Tim Davidson; Dr. Janna Martin, University of Oklahoma, Victoria Hoge Tulsa Career Tech Center; Kenneth Catlett, OU Gender and Equity Center; Dr. Cheryl Walker Esbaugh, Dr. Martha Skeeters, OU Women and Gender Studies; Leslie Henderson, McLennan Community College; James Barwick-Snell, LSU; Bonnie Perutzi and Mary Hopkins, Transitions House; and poet/therapist Colton Snead. I am grateful for all of your insightful suggestions and innovative ideas. Thank you to my OU students Ana Tapia, Oyebola T. Omosebi, Binta Samyang, and Stassi Vullo for your time and talent. A special thank you for Dr. Velma Walker for her writing guidance and mentoring. Finally, I would especially like to thank my family for all the support and ideas they gave me and all the experience and help from my wonderful husband/editor Dr. Daniel C. Snell (a writer of numerous Near Eastern history and religion texts) and my family, James, Abby, & Andrew, and my "other daughters," Jessica, Britney, and Cheyenne. Thanks to all my friends for their support, ideas, contributions, and suggestions.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge those individuals and publishers who kindly gave us their permission to reprint their materials. In several instances, we regret that even after diligent searching, we have not been able to properly credit material being used. Some of the material has been used for many years in classes and workshops with the result that proper identification has been lost, or we no longer are able to provide source information as we would like. Because the material has proved to be of great value, it is included in the book. We trust that eventually we will be able to credit these authors with proper recognition for their work.

Dr. Velma Walker and Dr. Katie Barwick-Snell

About the Authors

Dr. Velma Walker is a Professor Emeritus of psychology at Tarrant County College, Northeast Campus in Hurst, Texas. Although she has specialized in human relations courses for 39 years at the college level, she has also been a counselor and coordinator of student job placement and career information. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration/education, a master's degree in counseling and psychology, and a doctor of education degree, with emphasis in counseling, psychology, and administration. Dr. Walker is also a certified mediator for conflict resolution.



Dr. Walker has given human relations training seminars in the areas of communication, motivation, stress management, time management, and personality lifestyles for educators and business and professional groups for over 36 years. She has also served as a teacher consultant for the Educational Division of the Zig Ziglar Corporation. Dr. Walker is a multiple year honoree in *Who's Who Among America's Teachers*.

After 12 editions of a most enjoyable experience of writing *Becoming Aware*, it is now time to spend more time traveling with my husband of 43 years and more importantly, enjoying time with our six-year-old granddaughter, Reagan. Thank you for your support of *Becoming Aware*, and I am pleased to tell you that Dr. Katie Barwick-Snell, Associate Professor in Human Relations and Women and Gender Studies at the University of Oklahoma, will now be the lead author.

Dr. Katie Barwick-Snell has been a faculty member at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, since the early 1990s. She is currently teaching undergraduate and graduate students in Human Relations, Women and Gender Studies, and in the College of Liberal Studies. She helped develop and implement the undergraduate Human Relations program and was the first academic advisor of the popular undergraduate major in Human Relations. She has won numerous advising and teaching awards. Her B.S. is in Home Economics from Mississippi State University, her M.S. in Human Development from the University of Oklahoma, and her Ed.D. in Occupational and Adult Education from Oklahoma State University.



She was on faculty in the former Home Economics Department at USAO in Chickasha, Oklahoma and the former School of Home Economics at the University of Oklahoma. She was also cook on an archeology dig in Syria in the late 1980s and has lived in Australia and Scotland.

Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world.
—MALALA YOUSAFZAI

She is a long-time volunteer for Norman's Center for Children and Families, the Women's Resource Center Board of Directors, and most recently a community volunteer with Parents Helping Parents, an organization for parents of substance abuse, to offer hope and help to other parents. She has recently become a "parent coach" for the Partnership for Drug-Free Kids drugfree.org/helpline. She is married and has two fantastic grown children, a wonderful son in law, three delightful "other daughters," and three geriatric dogs.

Chapter 1

Getting Acquainted with Ourselves and Others



I sincerely believe that the word relationship is the key to the prospect of a decent world. It seems abundantly clear that every problem you will have—in your family, your business, in your personal life, in our nation, or in this world—is essentially a matter of relationships or interdependence. —Clarence Francis, Business leader

Think About This...

Think for a minute about your greatest experiences in life. Undoubtedly, you were with another person.

- What would we do without other people?
- What would you do without friends?
- What would it be like?
- Where would you go?
- Would you have fun?
- How do you react in a group? Do you feel shy or do you speak out?
- Would you know what love is?
- Have you ever had a close friend or close relative die? How did you feel when it happened?
- Have you ever experienced or had a close friend or relative experience a divorce? Did they feel lonely? Were they depressed? What did they experience?
- How did you feel when your best friend or lover returned after being gone for a long period of time? Overjoyed? Excited?

It is obvious that personal relationships and friendships are important to us. We need merely to reflect for a moment on the source of our greatest pleasure and pain to appreciate that nothing else in our life has aroused the extremes of emotion more than the relationships that we have experienced with other human beings.

What is Human Relations?

Human relations (HR) has many meanings to many people, but for this text **human relations** can be defined as the art of developing relationships that improve personal skills and life effectiveness. It offers insight into how you fit into the world and feel about race, class, and gender issues. Basically you have to understand yourself before you can understand others effectively and “**become aware**” of how you fit into the world. In looking at yourself and how you relate to others you can build better relationships and succeed at school and work. Human relations has an emphasis on “soft skills” such as behavior, empathy, co-operation, intergroup development, and interpersonal development. The field of study incorporates sociology, psychology, communications, and other areas like management and human development into the curriculum. Another definition of human relations is the study of improving interpersonal relationships among people or groups of people. As you can see, the basic study of human relations includes a great deal of attention to the emotional needs of oneself as well as the emotional needs of others.

According to Dr. George Henderson, Sylvan N. Goldman Professor of Human Relations at the University of Oklahoma, “Human relations encompasses all the many ways in which people interact with each other to form social units. Unlike social scientists, who are interested primarily in describing *what is*, students of human relations are also concerned with determining *what may be done* to foster positive group interactions.” (Henderson, 1996, p.17). He also states that the conflicts that grow out of human relationships may take many forms, positive and negative, such as age and sex rivalry, racism, and, possibly, violence. Microaggressions may also occur as a subtle interaction.

*Relationships are
the foundation
for meaning and
success in life.*

—DOUGLAS
DAFT

Human relations is the study of improving interpersonal relationships among people or groups of people. Dr. Lowell Lamberton defines HR as “the skill or ability to work effectively through and with other people” (Lamberton, 2014, p. 4). Human relations include a desire to understand others, their needs and weaknesses, and their talents and abilities. For anyone in a workplace setting, human relations also involve an understanding of how people work together in groups, satisfying both individual needs and group objectives. If an organization is to succeed, the relationships among the people in that organization must be monitored and maintained (Lamberton, 2014). So, as we can see, the basic study of human relations includes a great deal of attention to the emotional needs of oneself as well as the emotional needs of others.

Human relations begins with self-understanding. The self is about being a total person or individual. You have a **public self**—that is how you communicate about yourself—and what others actually perceive about you—the **private self**—is the actual person that you may be (Dubrin, 2013). In a perfect culture, cultural messages provide scripts for how men and women internally should interact with each other, and therefore, not only gender, but also the gender composition of a friendship, influence a relationship. Women and men regularly face a host of media images that romanticize and sexualize their routine encounters and confront an array of societal expectations and constraints that make a rewarding friendship with someone of the opposite sex challenging (Baumgarten, 2002).

In order to become a healthy and happy person, an individual needs to form close, caring interpersonal relationships. How do we learn to do this? Perhaps the words of John Hope Bryant, founder and CEO of Operation HOPE, will provide some thoughts worth remembering:

People meet you where you are. If you're open, they tend to be open. If you're closed, they tend to be closed. If you're vulnerable, they tend to be vulnerable. And people are often a little insecure and afraid of themselves. They're afraid to tip their hand. It's just human nature, self-preservation. People will generally only tip their hand when they see you tip your hand. (Bryant, 2009)

George Vaillant is the director of a 72-year study of the lives of 268 men. "In an interview in the March 2008 newsletter to the Grant Study subjects, Vaillant was asked, 'What have you learned from the Grant Study men?' Vaillant's response: **'That the only thing that really matters in life is your relationships to other people.'**" He shared insights of the study with Joshua Wolf Shenk at *The Atlantic* on how men's social connections made a difference to their overall happiness (Shenk, 2009).

Becoming Aware of your Skills - during the reading of this text we will have a video or exercise to do with ways you can get the most of this material. Take a few minutes and watch this video by David Myers discussing study tips with SQ3R or "Testing Effect"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFIK5gutHKM&feature=youtu.be>

David Myers, best-selling introductory psychology author from Worth Publishers, talks about how to make things memorable and study more effectively through the "Testing Effect."

Self-Disclosure

DO YOU KNOW YOURSELF?

Self-awareness is necessary in order to fully understand others. We start the textbook with a review of psychology information which maybe new to you or an **update**. Psychologists have found that a person must gain an understanding of themselves before they can become acquainted with others and understand others. There are some basic questions concerning self-discovery and getting acquainted with others that you can ask yourself. How well do I know myself? Is it easy for other people to get to know me? How well do other people really know me? How much of myself do I reveal to those with whom I want to have a close, personal relationship? How much do I want them to know about me regarding my innermost thoughts, feelings, and actions? You also have to ask yourself, how interested am I in learning the innermost thoughts, feelings, and actions of those with whom I desire to have a close relationship? As you read on, you will discover the importance of revealing the “real you” to other people.

If I tell you who I am, you may not like who I am, and it's all that I have.

—JOHN POWELL

The revealing of the inner-self is called self-disclosure. This means talking to another person about your innermost thoughts and feelings, your aspirations and dreams, your fears and doubts. It is talking about things of which you are ashamed and proud. Self-disclosure is a crucial part of relationship building. Dr. Sidney Marshall Jourard, a Canadian psychologist from the 1960-70's, is also known for his “Self-Disclosure Theory” of humanistic therapy. The process was originally defined as telling others about yourself. Since then, an extensive amount of information about disclosure has been produced. Decision making behind the act of disclosing private information is an

How do we learn to form close relationships?



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extremely complicated process, especially when we are considering close personal relationships and family interactions. According to Reiss (2006), sexual self-disclosure is likely to bring about greater bonding between intimates. We know that, although intimacy often increases the possibility of revealing information, there are times when disclosure is counterproductive for the relationship or family.

Why study self-disclosure? The evolution of a relationship, getting acquainted, becoming friends, and developing intimacy, is based on how much you are willing to disclose about yourself and how much the other person is willing to disclose about themselves to you. The more you know about another person and the more he or she knows about you, the more effective and efficient the relationship will be. People who share their ideas, interests, experiences, expectations, and feelings with others will generally have more friends and develop long lasting relationships easier than those who do not (Lynch & Daniels, 2000; Delerga et al., 1993). It can be hard when a lack of self-disclosure makes people suspicious and uncomfortable around us. In turn, they will not talk about themselves, and finding those common interests on which to base a relationship will become difficult

The unexamined life is not worth living.
—SOCRATES

Is self-disclosure important in a relationship? Good self-disclosure skills are fundamental to relationships for many reasons. These reasons include the following:

- **Defining Yourself.** Disclosing personal information lets you be known to others. If you do not define yourself, misunderstandings are more likely to occur. Others may perceive you based on their own interpretation rather than on information you give them.
- **Knowing Yourself.** As you disclose information about yourself, you can get deeper insight and understanding about the kind of person you are. You also give others the opportunity to give you feedback.
- **Getting Acquainted.** Talking about yourself and letting other people talk about themselves gives each of you the opportunity to understand and know the other as an individual. Each is given the opportunity to understand and trust the other. **Reciprocity** (a positive response from the person with whom one is sharing information) often happens. Then the other person who received the disclosure self-discloses in turn.
- **Developing Intimacy.** As you begin to share and receive, a deeper feeling of trust and understanding will evolve and a mutual feeling of closeness will develop.
- **Being Responsible.** Behaving responsibly with that knowledge and not betraying your friend's confidence is another key element in self-disclosure. If you disclose information about a friend without their permission you may lose that friend

Only in the part of us that we share, can we understand each other.
—ANONYMOUS

Before we can engage in self-disclosure, there must be an atmosphere of goodwill and trust. An individual is not likely to engage in much self-disclosure if the situation involves too much personal threat, or even a threat to anyone with whom he or she is closely associated. According to Wilson (2008) the notion that privacy is "right" has probably been lost on Millennials. Some feel that many people today do not have as much privacy because of social media disclosing information about them. Public self/

FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

RESPECTING DIVERSITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

Researchers often study communication behaviors of various cultures and have noted that self-disclosure tends to be high in mainstream North American society. People from various cultures, including ones within the United States, have learned different communication styles. What Westerners consider openness and healthy self-disclosure may feel offensively intrusive to people from some Asian societies. The dramatic, assertive speaking style of many African Americans can be misinterpreted as abrasive within a Western Caucasian perspective. The best way to understand what another's behavior means is to ask. This conveys the relational message that they matter to you, and it allows you to gain insight into the interesting diversity among us. For Americans, Japanese, and Koreans, self-disclosure was directly associated with online relationship development. However, the relationship between self-disclosure and trust was positive only for Americans (Yum & Hara, 2005). Americans' online relationships might be too open and trusting for other cultures.

If I expose my nakedness as a person to you, do not make me feel shamed.
—JOHN POWELL

private self is the term used for this phenomena. So be careful of disclosing too much on social media. Sociologist Dr. Brene Brown believes that we all need to define our boundaries. Boundaries are not fake walls or divisions but *respect for yourself and your friends* (Brown, 2010).

DO YOU NEED TO DISCLOSE?

Self-disclosure usually involves the sharing of private information, and it is generally of such a nature that it is not something you would normally disclose to everyone who might inquire about it. Therefore, you are not expected to bare the innermost secrets of your soul to casual acquaintances—you can save that information for the significant others in your life. Self-disclosure is a rewarding experience, comparable to those of food and sex (Tamir & Mitchell, 2012). People enjoy self-disclosure if they know other people are listening; talking is a means of catharsis toward good feelings. **Catharsis** is a release of emotional tension that can be achieved through sharing and self-disclosure with others. Self-disclosure promotes attraction. People feel a sense of closeness to others who reveal their vulnerabilities, innermost thoughts, and facts about themselves. The sense of closeness increases if the disclosures are emotional rather than factual. However, if you are to communicate effectively with others, some degree of self-disclosure is required.

It is extremely important to ask ourselves some important questions before disclosing (Punches, 2010):

- Can I trust this person with this information?
- How could this information be used against me? Misconstrued?

If civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships—the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace.
—FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

- Is this the right time and place to disclose?
- Am I sharing things about myself incrementally and slowly, or too much, too soon?
- How has the person received private information in the past?
- What could happen if I share too much too fast?

GENDER AND YOU

WOMEN DISCLOSE MORE THAN MEN

Several studies have looked at how men and women disclose online. Overall, they have found that women disclose online more than men (Kleman, 2007). When looking at the content of messages, Li (2006) found that computer-mediated communication messages sent by males were more confrontational and autonomous, while female messages were supportive and rapport-building (Sheldon, 2013). Women tend to have more friends and closer relationships than men. These friendships tend to provide them with more social support. Most research shows that women tend to be more openly self-disclosing than males, although the disparity seems smaller than originally believed. Because women tend to value "personal talk" more than men, they tend to share more personal information and feelings with their female friends (Kilmartin, 2010). Previous studies have shown that women disclose to their close friends more than men. Results of testing gender differences in self-disclosure suggest that women disclose to their exclusive face-to-face and exclusive Facebook friends more than men, but men have more intimate discussions with their recently added Facebook friends than women do (Sheldon, 2013).

Males tend to disclose more to strangers than females do, and are more willing to disclose casual things about themselves, such as their work, accomplishments, attitudes, and opinions. Males are also less intimate and less personal than females. Males are expected not to disclose; it's not "manly." In peer/friendship relationships that emphasize competition and challenge, males often avoid revealing weaknesses, and at times associate self-disclosure with loss of control and vulnerability. Research shows that men often become closer by doing things together or doing things for each other, rather than just talking with each other. (Wood, 2010). Byers and Demmons (2010) found that women disclose more than men do, both sexually and non-sexually. However, sexuality is a highly personal and private topic for self-disclosure. Women may be less comfortable than men are in discussing sex, especially their own sexual satisfaction, because the double standard of sex roles inhibits them from admitting to being knowledgeable about sex (Huong, 2010).

What should you reveal to another person? A few examples might be:

- Likes and dislikes
- Fears and anxieties
- Attitudes and opinions
- Tastes and interests
- Ideas about money

Long-distance relationships are hard no matter what.

When you don't have face-to-face time, it's just different.

—VANESSA HUDGENS

- Work perceptions
- Personality choices
- Feelings and reactions about events that have just taken place
- Perceptions of self and others

There are some disadvantages to self-disclosure as well, particularly if there is too much of it. Talking too much about ourselves early in a relationship may not facilitate the development of friendship. People might view your high self-disclosure as an indication that you are too immature, insecure, or phony, or even that you tell everyone such things. Other people like to think that they are special to you (O'Connel & O'Connel, 2005).

No one can develop freely in this world and find a full life without feeling understood by at least one person.

—PAUL TOURNIER

What is the greatest risk of self-disclosure? Personal disclosures that are too **general** reduce the sense of openness, thus reducing the feeling of closeness. Disclosures that are too **intimate** often highlight character and personality flaws, thus decreasing likeability. People who make intimate disclosures too early in relationships are often perceived as insecure, which further decreases likeability (Shafer, 2015). Self-disclosure involves taking risks. *The greatest risk is one of rejection—not being liked or accepted.* This may cause us to hide behind a mask—a *facade*—and try to be something we know we are not. In this state, effective communication cannot occur and the growth and maintenance of those deep, special, and meaningful relationships with friends and spouses cannot occur. Risk nothing, gain nothing. You have a choice—to withdraw from honest encounters, to hide your feelings, to falsify your intentions—or to be transparent, open, and real through self-disclosure.

What are the advantages of self-disclosure? Self-disclosure has the potential to improve and expand interpersonal relationships, but it serves other functions as well. One advantage is that **self-disclosure improves relationships**. We prefer to be with people who are willing to disclose to us and we are more willing to be open with them. Self-disclosure is a reciprocal process. Disclosure leads to trust and trust leads to more disclosure, and, thus, the relationship will grow and develop into a mature and long-lasting, loving interaction. There is a strong positive correlation between self-disclosure and marital satisfaction. Research has shown that the more a couple is willing to disclose about themselves, the greater the marital satisfaction and the greater the chance the marriage will last over a longer period of time (Santrock, 2006).

Self-disclosure promotes mental health. The second advantage is that *self-disclosure promotes mental health*. Withholding important information can create stress and thus lead to less-effective functioning and even possible physical problems (Jourard, 1976, Hyman, I. Self 2008). We all need a release, and for many of us “talking-out” our feelings, problems, and thoughts will relieve us of the stresses and anxieties that are interfering with our everyday functioning. This release of emotional tension through talking is known as a **catharsis**. As many of you have discovered, you feel relieved after sharing your problems with another person. This is the reason counseling and therapy are so effective for many individuals. Also having a wellness plan helps your mental health.

Self-disclosure online. With over 1 billion users and the continued growth in its popularity, Facebook is becoming another avenue for initiating and maintaining interper-

sonal relationships. A number of studies have found that relationship maintenance and social interaction (Sheldon, 2008; Smock, Ellison, Lampe, & Wohn 2011) are the primary motivations for using Facebook. Social network users tend to rely more on self-disclosures to create a sense of closeness because they do not receive verbal and nonverbal cues that would be otherwise exchanged in face-to-face communications. The veracity of information exchanged online is suspect, thus forcing online daters to spend more time verifying information from their online counterpart. Once veracity has been established, the lack of a physical presence increases the probability of more intimate disclosures online leading to the illusion of a close relationship and, likewise, increases the intensity of the disappointment when a relationship goes wrong (Shafer, 2015). Think about it- Are these relationships illusionary in closeness or are they just too fast? Emoji's are used by millennials and often adults aren't sure how to use them. This has caused some funny disclosures from adults to millennials. ;)

*What does the
baby chicken
know which we
overlook? The
shell around us
won't crack at
its own accord.*
—ANONYMOUS

Self-validation. Another advantage of self-disclosure is that periodically we need **self-validation**. If we disclose information such as “I think I may have made a mistake . . .”—with the hopes of obtaining the listener's agreement, you are seeking validation on your behavior—confirmation of a belief you hold about yourself. On a deeper level, this sort of self-validating disclosure seeks confirmation of important parts of your self-concept (Adler & Proctor, 2014).

EIGHT QUICK TIPS FOR INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING (ANNE LOEHR 2016)

When approaching any interaction with another person, try these eight things:

1. Assume the best intentions of the other person. I like the phrase “start new” trust that they have your best interests...
2. Understand the other person's perspective in the situation.
3. Truly listen and ask questions to learn more.
4. Share your perspective in the situation.
5. Find the commonalities.
6. Leverage those commonalities for the common good.
7. Keep communication open as you move forward (to minimize frustration and to create trust).
8. Speak up if things go awry.

The Johari Window

The Johari Window (1969), is a classic tool developed by and named after psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram, and can be looked upon as a communication window through which you become more aware of yourself and your potential as a

communicator, as you give and receive information about yourself and others. It is currently used as an easy tool for trainers to discuss who you think you are. In order for a relationship to develop into a quality relationship, there needs to be trust and mutual sharing of information and feelings, also known as *openness*. An *open communicator* is one who is willing to seek feedback from others and to offer information and personal feelings to others. Open communication involves both giving and receiving. According to the Window, a person's communication behavior can be viewed by looking at the size of each of the four windowpanes—Open Area, Hidden Area, Blind Area, and Unknown Area.

Figure 1.1 THE JOHARI WINDOW

	Known to Self	Unknown to Self
Known to Others	Open	Blind
Unknown to Others	Hidden	Unknown

Adapted from Joseph Luft, *Of Human Interaction*, by permission of Mayfield Publishing Co., Copyright 1969 by the National Press.

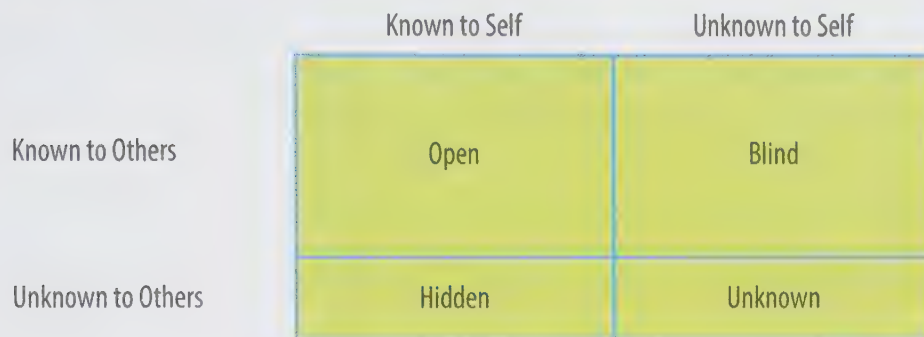
See Figure 1.1 for the four areas in the Johari Window:

1. The **Open Area**, which represents information you know about yourself that is also known to others.
2. The **Hidden Area**, which represents all that you know about yourself that is private and not known to others. Information in the Hidden area becomes public primarily through self-disclosure.
3. The **Blind Area**, which represents information about yourself that others can see, but you do not. An example would be a mannerism in speech or gesture of which you are unaware but that is quite obvious to others, such as constantly saying “you know” or constantly playing with your keys.
4. The **Unknown Area**, which represents information that is unknown to both you and others. Yes, this is quite possible. Remember, we are all constantly discovering new things about ourselves: an unrecognized talent, strength, or weakness can develop at any given point in time.

Your Johari Window will look quite different based on the nature of a relationship. For example, your relationship with your very best friend or your significant other will probably have a very large Open area (see Figure 1.2). However, someone you have just recently met will have a very small Open area (see Figure 1.3). As the relationship evolves and you become closer to that person, the Open area will grow, as you share

more about yourself. Likewise, as you listen to comments and feedback from this person, the size of your Blind area will decrease.

Figure 1.2 THE JOHARI WINDOW IN A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP



Adapted from Joseph Luft, *Of Human Interaction*, by permission of Mayfield Publishing Co., Copyright 1969 by the National Press.

Figure 1.3 THE JOHARI WINDOW EARLY IN A RELATIONSHIP



Adapted from Joseph Luft, *Of Human Interaction*, by permission of Mayfield Publishing Co., Copyright 1969 by the National Press.

The Johari Window *is a simple and useful tool for understanding yourself and others* in a variety of contexts:

- self-awareness
- personal development
- improving communications
- interpersonal relationships
- group dynamics
- team development; and
- intergroup relationships.

It is one of the few tools out there that has an emphasis on “soft skills” such as behavior, empathy, and cooperation; inter-group development; and interpersonal development. It’s a great model to use because of its simplicity and also because it can be applied in a variety of situations and environments. Involve other people and ask for feedback about yourself. Be prepared to seriously consider the feedback. That doesn’t mean that you have to do everything that’s suggested, but you should at least listen and think about it. Then give the person who provided the feedback some acknowledgement or thanks for making the effort. Depending on how confident you are you might prefer to do this as either a group exercise or on a one-to-one basis. Remember that giving effective feedback is a skill and some people may be better at it than others. When receiving feedback, be respectful, listen, and reflect on what has been said. It may be that, upon receiving feedback, you may want to explore the issue further, and that can lead to discovery about yourself.

The Johari window as a tool does have its drawbacks:

- Some things are perhaps better not communicated with others.
- People may pass on the information they received further than you desire or use it in a negative way.
- Some people or cultures have a very open and accepting approach to feedback and some do not. People can take personal feedback offensively, so it’s important when facilitating to exercise caution and start gradually.

Johari is a classic model, and, as with other powerful ideas, simply helping people to understand is the most effective way to optimize the value to people. When people really understand it in their own terms, it empowers them to use the thinking in their own way, and to incorporate the underlying principles into their future thinking and behavior.

Now think about it.

There are various ways you can use a Johari Window to evaluate your relationships and increase your self-knowledge. Think about your interactions with family, friends, people at work, school, etc. Generally, your strongest and closest relationships have a very large Open area because being open with the other person and listening to feedback build trust. You will have an opportunity to draw several Johari Windows at the end of this chapter.

Now, think about a particular person with whom you interact: Is it possible that you keep many parts of yourself hidden from this person?

Why are you doing this, and is it healthy for the relationship?

How open are you with people at work, school, acquaintances, friends, your nearest neighbors, and even family members?

In order to reduce the size of the Blind area and the Unknown area in some of your relationships, are there any individuals you may need to ask and be open to receive some honest feedback?

Are there any modifications you need to make in any of your relationships to increase your overall effectiveness?

Now that we understand the importance of self-disclosure in the development of a relationship, we need to understand why relationships are so important. We are all social beings and seek social relationships. We all have a need for other people. Relationships satisfy needs. We are motivated not only to seek the company of others, but to form close and lasting relationships. Many people have difficulty forming relationships and do not seem to have any friends. What happens to these people?

*Your greatness
is measured by
your kindness;
your education
and intellect by
your modesty;
your ignorance
is betrayed by
your suspicions
and prejudice
and your real
caliber is mea-
sured by the
consideration
and tolerance
you have for
others.*

—WM J.H.
BOETCKER

Relationship Building

According to Daniel and Lynch (2000) there are many kinds of relationships, and a given kind may fit a given person or couple at one stage of development but not at another. Driven by our personal history, we choose partners who help us meet our present needs, fulfill our expectations, and if we're lucky, work through our issues and grow in the directions in which we need to grow. For a person or couple, recognizing these can open doors to a broader spectrum of ways of being with ourselves and each other.

Five Dominant Patterns of Relationships

Daniel and Lynch found that there are **Five Dominant Patterns of Relationships**. Sharpening and deepening our awareness of we're doing, and how we're doing it, can help us change our behavior in ways that make a relationship more nourishing and supportive, and less toxic and painful. Or it can help us see what we're not going to find in this one. In either case, a clearer perception our present existential reality can help us move toward doing a better job of meeting our own (and often the other person's) needs.

1. **Survival Relationships.** These exist when partners feel like they can't make it on their own. In this type of situation, the choice of a partner tends to be indiscriminating, made out of emotional starvation—almost anyone available will do. This involves relating at its most basic: "Without you I am nothing; with you I am something." Often partners think in terms of what the other person wants them to want, and are out of touch with what they themselves want. They may have little tolerance for independence and aloneness, and "go everywhere together and do everything together."
2. **Validation Relationships.** A person may seek another's validation of his or her physical attractiveness, intellect, social status, sexuality, wealth, or some other attribute. Many teenagers and young adults who are looking for a sense of

identity form relationships based on physical or sexual validation. If no deeper basis for connecting materializes and the partners drift apart, there is a strong chance that the needs for validation have been met and the partners have begun seeking something different. At that point, the relationship has done its work. The partners have learned to validate in themselves the qualities they were insecure about and they are ready to connect along other dimensions.

3. **Scripted Relationships.** This common pattern often begins when the partners both are just out of high school or college. They seem to be “the perfect pair,” fitting almost all the external criteria of what an appropriate mate should be like. The marriage involves living out their traditional sex role expectations for the roles they learned they were supposed to play. He has the “right” kind of job and she is the “right” kind of wife and they have the “right” kind of house or apartment or condo in the “right” place. Partners in these relationships need to look at all the things they’ve wanted to do in life but haven’t, because these things didn’t fit their stereotypes about themselves and their expectations about their partners. They need to learn to communicate at an emotional level, to disclose their feelings and listen to those of their partner. They may need to learn to work less and play more.
4. **Acceptance Relationships.** This is what many of us thought we were getting into when we entered a relationship, including many people in the three categories above. In an acceptance relationship we trust, support, and enjoy each other. And within broad limits, we are ourselves.
5. **Individuation-Assertion Relationships.** These relationships are based on the assertion of each person’s wants and needs, and on respect for the other person’s process of personal growth. Often they are focused on partners’ struggles with what is missing or lacking in terms of self-discovery, becoming whole, and developing their potentialities. They require each person’s acknowledgment and appreciation of their differences.

For some couples in other forms of relationships, it’s easier to move into an acceptance relationship, while for others it’s easier to move into an individuation/assertion relationship. In a scripted relationship where partners have very different interests but genuinely care for each other, loosening the role expectations and creating space for each person to follow his or her own pursuits is one way to step out of chronic power struggles.

Living Alone. The experience of living alone deserves a few words in the context of relationships. The reasons people live alone include:

- First, some processes are “loner” processes, such as grieving, or exploring oneself in a variety of contexts with a variety of people.
- Second, people may keep their distance from others because of fears and insecurities. Some kind of counseling or therapy is often appropriate here.
- Third, they may keep their distance because of a desire to learn to stand alone and be independent, or to work through issues which caused trouble in a past relationship before moving into a new one.
- Fourth, a person may be available, but face a supply-and-demand inequality of acceptable partners. In this case, a network of supportive friends can be invaluable.

- Finally, someone may be fulfilled enough on his or her own and feel no strong need for a partner. Some highly creative artists fall into this category. A network of supportive friends can be valuable.

FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

PUT YOURSELF IN SOMEONE'S SHOES: A DIVERSITY THOUGHT

My mother would always remind me, "Put yourself in the other person's shoes. Don't think you know how they feel and what they have to go through daily." We have added to this text a number of concepts and ideas that you may not believe in or agree with. They include sensitive ethnic, cultural, and gender issues. It is so important to consider different sides of the issue in a contemplative, analytical way. Our world needs more people to feel open to others and meet new people who are not like them. This is the only way we will end the racial and gender turmoil, such as violence against women or violence against police or anything else that becomes fodder for the news media. Unless we can educate ourselves about others, be aware of information about sociocultural issues from more than one perspective, develop relationships, and "walk in another's shoes" we will not be truly educated.

Loneliness

Have you ever felt lonely? What causes loneliness? Answer the questions on the following page before you continue to read this section.

The lack of relationships can create *loneliness*.

Loneliness occurs when a person has fewer interpersonal relationships than desired or when the relationships are not as satisfying as desired. Loneliness is one of the most serious problems in our society today, "Loneliness isn't a feeling to be ashamed of, but simply a way for your body to tell you that you need more connections just like hunger means you need food," says Shasta Nelson, founder of Girlfriend Circles.com, a women's friendship matching site, and author of *Frientimacy: How to Deepen Friendships for Lifelong Health and Happiness* (2016). Research shows that when a person reports feeling lonely, their close family and friends are 52 percent more likely to say they're lonely too, and others can "catch" loneliness up to three degrees of separation (i.e., your friend's friend's friend), according to a study in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Loneliness is **not** something that happens only when we are physically alone. It can also happen when we are with people. Online friends, followers, or "likers" don't necessarily add up to much when you crave fulfilling interaction, and satisfying, long-term relation-

ships are not a mystery to be left up to chance (or technology). The good news is that, according to relationship coach Kira Asatryan, loneliness has a reliable antidote: the feeling of closeness. We can and should cultivate closeness in our relationships using the steps outlined in this book: knowing, caring, and mastering closeness.



check this out

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT LONELINESS?

TRUE OR FALSE?

- _____ Loneliness is more predominant during adolescence.
- _____ Loneliness varies with the time of day and day of the week.
- _____ Loneliness may be a sign of personal problems.
- _____ Loneliness may be the cause of depression, suicide, and other mental disorders.
- _____ The elderly are less lonely than most groups of individuals.
- _____ Loneliness is not the same as aloneness.
- _____ Most people assume other people have more friends than they do.

Based on research and literature all of the above statements are mostly true and we will address them in the following information.

The truth is that between two-thirds and three-fourths of Americans believe there is more loneliness in today's society than there used to be, report dissatisfaction in their current friendships, and feel they have fewer meaningful relationships than they did five years ago. Another statistic comes from a study, published in the *American Sociological Review*, that looked at two decades of social isolation in the United States. To the question of how many confidants one has, in 1994 the common answer was two to three confidants; as of 2004 the answer was closer to zero. (Nelson, 2016) Much more than half of the world's populations are chronically depressed or lonely, and everyone will experience some type of depression at some point in their lives. But the good news is you don't have to go it alone (Creole 2016).

You can learn strategies to alleviate the symptoms of depression and loneliness. Talk to your medical doctor about these feelings and they can decide if you need a counselor, a support group, or maybe medication. With so many people in the world who are depressed and taking antidepressants there is no shame. Another treatment for both loneliness and depression is pet therapy, or animal-assisted therapy, as it is more formally known. Studies and surveys, as well as anecdotal evidence provided by volunteer and community organizations, indicate that the presence of animal companions such as dogs, cats, rabbits, and guinea pigs can ease feelings of depression and loneliness among some sufferers. Beyond the companionship the animal itself provides there may also be increased opportunities for socializing with other pet owners. Many university classes will allow therapy pets in the classroom to give support and ease anxiety for their owners.

Maybe the biggest problem with loneliness is that we walk around thinking we are the only ones suffering from it.

—JEANNE
MARIE LASKAS

Can people be lonely in the presence of others? The answer is a resounding **yes**, and the feeling can be dreadful. Mara commented, “You can be in the center of a crowd and be dreadfully lonely.” Some people can feel lonely even when surrounded by others. Debbi, whose husband had left her, said, “I have periods of loneliness now, but it’s nothing compared to how lonely I felt when my husband was sitting in the same room with me.” Being married offers no protection from the dangers of loneliness: Studies indicate that roughly 20% of the general population suffers from chronic loneliness at any given time, and in one recent study of older adults, 62.5% of people who reported being lonely were married and living with their partner. In addition to the emotional anguish loneliness creates, it also has devastating effects on our mental and physical health. Loneliness depresses our immune system functioning, increases inflammatory responses that put us at greater risk for cardiovascular disease, and can literally shorten our longevity. On the mental health front, loneliness puts us at risk for depression and anxiety and causes us to distort our perceptions such that we view ourselves, our lives, and our relationships more negatively—which in turn, influences our behavior in damaging ways (Winch, 2013).

Being lonely is not the same as being alone. Some people prefer solitude and are content with fewer social interactions. Many of us have a need to be alone at times in order to maintain our mental health. Loneliness is a highly subjective and personal feeling. Guy Winch in his article “Together But Lonely” (sometimes referred to as Living Together Lonely LTL) offers three strategies to overcome loneliness. The first is to take the initiative and ask your partner about something they care about and really listen. The second is to try to make shared memories. You might try certain activities that require little effort, like a walk in the neighborhood. And lastly try to take their perspective. Often couples that have been together a while assume they know what the other is thinking (Winch, 2013).

Who is lonelier? Loneliness is found in all groups. Loneliness is most prevalent among teenagers, unmarried young adults, the divorced, and the widowed. Actually, traditional college students who are among thousands of peers who suffer more loneliness than any other group (Wiseman et al., 2006). Though we may know a lot of people, that doesn’t mean we feel we have meaningful connections. But if we don’t acknowledge our need—and admit that we lack meaningful connections, that we feel disconnected—we limit our chances of getting our needs met. In other words, if we don’t identify the problem, we can’t do anything about it. To admit we wish for more meaningful friendships is the first step to inviting us to then ask the all-important question, “What could I do to develop more fulfilling relationships in my life?” (Nelson, 2016). Everyone needs a confidant. A confidant is a person with whom one can share problems and worries and who gives one feelings of being understood and accepted (Wills & Ainette, 2012).

Preventing and reducing loneliness is crucial to well-being and good health. Social relationships protect people against loneliness. Friendship qualities like intimacy and frequency of contact may vary throughout a person’s lifespan (Nicolaisen & Thorsen, 2016).

Loneliness makes a person vulnerable to many different situations. This may include more depression, use of drugs as an escape, and higher blood pressure. There is even some evidence that points to loneliness as being associated with higher risks for heart disease, lessened longevity, and increased risk for recurrent illness (Hafen et al., 2005).

Weiss and Schneider also found that new connections are impacting not only society as a whole, but more specifically communication in relationships and across generations (2014).

*Attract what
you expect.
Reflect what
you desire... Be-
come what you
respect..and
Mirror what
you admire.*

Zhou, Sedikides, Wildschut, and Gao (2008) found they can counteract loneliness with nostalgia by increasing perceived social support similar to what you had in your early years. Think about how your music from when you were young makes you feel or play music for your parents or grandparents from their high school or college years and see if it lifts their spirits. Renowned scientists Christakis and Fowler present compelling evidence for our profound influence on one another's tastes, health, wealth, happiness, beliefs, and overcoming loneliness, as they explain how social networks form and how they operate (2009).

What Should a Relationship Provide?

Once a friendship is established through **self-disclosure and reciprocity**, the glue that binds is **intimacy**. According to Beverly Fehr's research, people in successful same-sex friendships seem to possess a well-developed, intuitive understanding of the give and take of intimacy (1999). "Those who know what to say in response to another person's self-disclosure are more likely to develop satisfying friendships," Fehr says (1999). Hefty helpings of emotional expressiveness and unconditional support are ingredients here, followed by acceptance, loyalty, and trust. Our friends are there for us through thick and thin, but rarely cross the line: A friend with too many opinions about our wardrobe, our partner, or our taste in movies and art may not be a friend for long (Karbo, 2016). Once a friendship is established through self-disclosure and reciprocity, the glue that binds is intimacy. understanding of the give and take of intimacy.

*Relationships
with others
lie at the very
core of human
existence.
—ELLEN BER-
SCHEID AND
LETTIA PEPLAU*

Why do our society and many other cultures put so much emphasis on marriage? Why are there clubs for single people, escort services, singles bars, dating services, and social networking websites, people advertising for partners in local newspapers, and using 1-900 telephone services to meet new people? Why—because people are lonely. We have a strong need for relationships. The following needs must be satisfied in order to have a fulfilling life and overcome feelings of loneliness.

Emotional attachments. We all need to know that no matter what the situation is or whatever we do, good or bad (for better or worse, in sickness or in health), that there will be someone around to take care of us or help us out. As long as we know this,

we feel comfortable and secure. A child who knows that mother or father is available whenever he or she needs one of them will feel secure enough to explore the world around them. They will be willing to take some chances and risks in life. A child who is insecure and not sure if the parents will be available when needed will be clinging and unsure of other people. How would you feel if you were told by your parents, “If you ever get in trouble with the law,” or “If I ever hear about you taking drugs,” or “If you ever get someone pregnant or get pregnant, don’t step a foot back in this house?” Most people who have been told this when they were young feel very insecure and lonely since they are not sure anyone will be there in a time of need.

Where do we get emotional attachments? Most people will receive their emotional attachments from their parents, and pets, especially during their early years of development. And if you think about it, many individuals continue to rely on their parents for this support for most of their lives. This is why you will hear stories about married couples who, when they are having marital problems, will go back to their parents’ home, because parents still provide that individual with the feeling of security. As we tend to mature and start to “cut the apron strings,” becoming more independent, we begin to find this emotional support from others—our best friend, boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, pastor, etc. For some people, their dog or cat will provide them with this feeling of security.

People and animals have a long history of living together and bonding. Perhaps the oldest evidence of this special relationship was discovered a few years ago in Israel—a 12,000-year-old human skeleton buried with its hand resting on the skeleton of a 6-month-old wolf pup. “The bond between animals and humans is part of our evolution, and it’s very powerful,” says Dr. Ann Berger, a physician and researcher at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Maryland. Today animal companions are more popular than ever. The pet population nationwide has been growing dramatically for nearly a half century, from about 40 million pet cats and dogs in 1967 to more than 160 million in 2006. About two-thirds of U.S. households now own at least one pet. (NIH, 2016)

Inanimate objects can also be a source of security. Items such as teddy bears, dolls, or imaginary companions are examples. Other sources could be certain belief systems, religious beliefs, or a philosophy of life and even confidence within one’s self may satisfy the need for emotional attachments for some people. A young child’s blanket or teddy bear is a source of security for some. As you know, if you take the blanket or bear away from some children even for a short time just to be washed, the child will go into a rage and become very insecure and lonely.

What happens to a person who has been relying solely on their spouse for the satisfaction of this need, especially when the spouse announces that the relationship is over? This person will become insecure, lonely, and vulnerable. A newly divorced or separated individual who has lost his or her emotional support is very open and vulnerable to another person or belief system that tends to show support for the individual. This is why many individuals will possibly end up in a negative relationship, some type of cult or so-called religion, or gang that purports to provide emotional support.

*Whosoever
is delighted
in solitude is
either a wild
beast or a god.
—FRANCIS
BACON*

People are
lonely because
they build
walls instead of
bridges.

—JOSEPH
NEWTON

Social ties *Social ties* provide us with the feeling of belonging—a feeling that we are part of a group and have an identity. During early childhood this feeling of belonging and developing an identity is, for most children, provided by their parents. This is expressed with statements like, “I’m a member of the Smith family or Adams family or Sanchez family.” Later in childhood, the peer group becomes more important to them than the family, especially during adolescence. Special groups, clubs, teams, and religious organizations such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Bluebirds, Indian Guides, Little League, church youth groups, pep clubs, gangs, and fraternal organizations provide many young people with a feeling of identity. Have you ever observed a child walking down the street in their scout uniform or team uniform? They really think they are “special.” The uniform makes them feel like they are part of a group and they have an identity. We all need an identity.

How does the person feel who is not able to join a club or be a member of a team? This person feels “left out” and feels that there is something missing in their life. They will do whatever it takes to satisfy this need. The end result of not having this need satisfied is the same as for those whose emotional attachment needs are not satisfied. This person will feel lonely, depressed, and vulnerable.

Who provides you
with a feeling of
belonging?

How can we satisfy this need? *Social ties* may be satisfied through positive as well as negative means. Social ties may be satisfied through marriage—a legal bond that makes you feel like you belong to another person and have a recognized identity. A person’s job or career may also give some people a feeling of identity or belonging. Ask a person the question, “Who are you?” and the response is generally, “I’m a student, a banker, a plumber, a salesperson, an attorney,” etc. These titles give the individual an identity, and the organization the person works for gives the person a feeling of belonging.

During the high school and college years, a person’s identity may be found in many different ways. Some students find their identity by being on an athletic team, by being an excellent student, playing in the band or orchestra, dating a cheerleader, being in a sorority or fraternity, or just working a job to pay the bills. If a student does not find his or her identity or feeling of belonging through “normal” or acceptable means, they will attempt to satisfy this need through other means, such as drugs, non-traditional clothing, a unique hair-style, promiscuous behavior, gang activity, delinquent behavior, or some people delve into the world of the Internet or social media and can narrow their world.



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Emotional support and social ties are not only important to young people, but they are vital to all of us and will continue to be important throughout our lives. We will be in a constant state of stress and anxiety if our emotional support and social ties change too much. Divorce, death of a loved one, changing jobs or being fired from a job, retirement, breaking up with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or a serious illness may be the cause of our needs changing. People with adequate social support are also less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, and numerous physical problems. And, in a four-year study of 823 people, Dr. Robert Wilson (2007), senior neuropsychologist, Rush University Medical Center, reported that seniors who feel disconnected from other people are twice as likely to develop an Alzheimer's-like form of dementia as those who are not lonely.

You can make more friends in two months by being interested in other people than you can in two years trying to get others interested in you.

—ZIG ZIGLAR

The discussion of emotional support and social ties should demonstrate to all of us that we should not rely only on one person or one source for the satisfaction of our emotional and social needs. We all need to work at developing a good support system. Yet, is there anything we can do to enhance our personal, meaningful relationships?

MUTUAL REWARD THEORY (MRT)

The Mutual Reward Theory (MRT) states that a relationship between two people is enhanced when there is a satisfactory balance of rewards between them (O'Neil & Chapman, 2008). Actually, if any meaningful relationship is to remain healthy over a long period of time, the individuals involved must benefit from the relationship. The more equally the rewards balance out, the stronger and more permanent the relationship becomes. The relationship will quickly weaken if one individual suddenly realizes that he or she has been contributing significantly more than he or she has been receiving.

Now that we understand the need for relationships, many of us still find it difficult to get to know other people and develop good relationships. Why do we fear getting acquainted?

The Fear of Getting Acquainted—Shyness

Meeting people and forming relationships should be fun, but for a lot of people it is a difficult process full of stress and anxiety. "It seems so easy for other people, but for me, it's one of the most difficult things I do in life." Because of the complexity of our society, we have made the process of getting acquainted and developing relationships an involved process. "How can I make meeting people and forming relationships more fun and less stressful? Why do I feel so uncomfortable meeting people?" You may want to answer the questions in the box on page 23.

Having enjoyed the friendship of many people in many places for many years—I have learned that, in the main, people are as we choose to find them.
—DORIS SCHARY

Am I shy? How did you answer the questions? If your answer to any of the questions is that you feel uncomfortable, anxious, inhibited, and excessively cautious, then you showed signs of shyness. Do not feel bad—shyness is universal. You have lots of company. Nearly one of two Americans claims to be shy. What is more interesting, the incidence is rising, and the use of the computer and technology may be turning our society into a culture of shy people (Carducci & Zimbardo, 2016). It affects the young and old, men and women, celebrities and people like you and me. It is a very common problem. The consequences of shyness may be devastating. If you mistake having alone time for shyness, remember that everyone needs alone time but some need more of it.

How common is shyness? Researcher Dr. Bernardo Carducci (2000) in his popular book, *Shyness: A Bold New Approach*, makes it very clear that between 75 and 95 percent of people have felt shy at one point in their lives. In fact, Dr. Carducci has compiled the following statistics on the pervasiveness of shyness:

A man who
talks only of
himself and
thinks only of
himself is
hopelessly
uneducated.
—MURRAY
BUTLER

- About 80 percent of American college students report they have been shy at some point in their lives.
- Almost 50 percent of our population says that they're shy.
- About 89 percent of shy people claim that they've been shy all their lives.
- Of people who are not shy now, 75 percent have been shy at some point in the past.
- Only 11 percent of our population claims that they are not shy now and have never been shy in the past.
- About 21 percent of shy people feel shy daily or almost daily, while almost 60 percent of the people who say that they're shy feel shy at least once a week.
- About 78 percent of shy people believe that they can overcome shyness, while 3 percent say that they cannot.

Dr. Carducci also comments that the three most common shyness-provoking situations are: 1) being around strangers, 2) the presence of people in positions of authority by virtue of their role or knowledge, and 3) being with members of the opposite sex, either one-on-one or in a group (2000).

It's a shame
when the
things that are
on your mind
and in your
heart never
reach your lips.
—ANONYMOUS

What is shyness? We're all a little shy at times when meeting other people. It's hardly surprising that shyness can often interfere with how we interact in social situations. For some people, however, shyness can lead to social anxiety and a crippling fear that results in deliberate isolation to avoid associating with others (Vitelli, 2013). **Shyness** refers to a tendency to withdraw from people, particularly unfamiliar people (Stein & Walker, 2009). Shyness involves *feelings*, *physical reactions*, and *thoughts* that create a state of anxiety, discomfort, and inhibition. Extremely shy individuals are typically low in self-esteem and largely preoccupied with what others think of them. Driven by a fear of rejection, shy people often engage in self-sabotage to prevent themselves from growing closer to others and avoid social situations when possible (Stein & Walker, 2009).

What are the consequences of shyness? Often starting in early childhood, shy children are at greater risk of being bullied and rejected by their peers. Those friendships they do succeed in making are often of lower quality than the friendships made by children who are less shy. Shy children are more likely to internalize problems such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness. There are also gender differences with shy boys being more likely to have socio-emotional difficulties than shy girls. This is probably due to shyness being less socially acceptable for boys than for girls since boys are expected to be more dominant and self-confident (Vitelli, 2013). For some people shyness may become a “mental handicap” that is as crippling as the most severe of physical handicaps. Its consequences can be devastating. What are the consequences of shyness? (Zimbardo, 1990; Carducci & Zimbardo, 2015; Duffy, 2007/2008).

1. *Shy people become preoccupied with themselves and thus become self-conscious. Because of this, they are not aware of other people's feelings and needs.*
- 2.. *Shyness makes it difficult for us to become acquainted with new people and thus make new friends.*

Something to Think About

HOW DO YOU FEEL IN THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS?

- Meeting people for the first time.
- Asking someone for a date.
- Giving a talk in front of a group of people.
- Going to a party or going to a dance or nightclub.
- Asking someone for help—for example, your boss or professor.
- Being interviewed or participating in a discussion group.
- Situations requiring assertiveness—for example, asking for your money back.
- Showing your body in a nonsexual context.

3. *Shyness keeps us from experiencing new situations.* This could affect our career prospects or higher education. Shy young adults are also less likely to date, get married later (if at all), and are less likely to enter into stable relationships according to Vitelli (2013). Through different relationships, most young adults learn what they are looking for in a permanent partner and also become more experienced in handling a stable relationship. For shy people who do not gain these experiences, their ability to form permanent intimate relationships later in life may be impaired (Vitelli, 2013).
4. *Shyness prevents people from standing up for their own rights and as individuals, keeps them from expressing their own feelings and beliefs.*
5. *Shy people tend not to demonstrate their personal strengths and capabilities. As a result, they prevent others from making positive evaluations.* If you have two em-

Mutual confidence is the foundation of all satisfactory human relationships.
—NAPOLEON HILL

ployees, equal in all abilities except that one is shy and the other is not shy, which of the two would you promote? In most situations the non-shy person would be promoted because we are more aware of his or her potential than that of the shy person.

6. *Some people are not really shy—they are presenting respect from their culture or they might need time to know you before they interact.*

Shyness is a series of choices that gradually cement into a lifestyle.

—BERNARDO
CARDUCCI

What is the difference between a shy and non-shy person? It may come as a surprise to many of you that the major difference between the two individuals is a matter of *self-evaluation*. How do you compare yourself to others? Do you see yourself as capable, intelligent, or as attractive as the person next to you? If the answer is no, then would you interact with them? Or, if you did have to interact with them, how would you feel? Would you feel inferior or inadequate? Many people would feel this way. Why? As we stated earlier, shyness is a matter of self-evaluation—how you compare yourself with others. Actually this should tell you how ridiculous shyness really is, since we are all capable human beings. Just because the other person is a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or engineer does not mean that person is superior to you. The other person may have more formal education than you or more money than you, but you may have more common sense, or real-life education. You are just as good as the other person.

Technology and shyness. Technology is continually redefining how we communicate. We are not engaging in as many face-to-face interactions on a daily basis. How often do you call a friend or colleague when you know they are not in so you can leave a message on their machine? How often do you see a bank teller or gas station attendant? Voice mail, faxes, banking online, text messaging, and e-mail give us an illusion of being “in touch,” but what is to touch but the keyboard?

Today’s teens and college students are what researchers call “digital natives,” or the “iGeneration,” a generation constantly connected to the Internet and Facebook, texting and instant messaging. Certainly, there are positive and negative effects of social networks. However, research by Larry Rosen (2011), a social media researcher at California State University, indicates that the online social networking experience can give shy kids an easier experience building relationships, by speaking through a keyboard instead of in person. The electronic age was supposed to give us more time, but ironically it has stolen it from us. Technology has made us time-efficient and redefined our sense of time and its value. It is not to be wasted, but to be used quickly and with a purpose. Office encounters have become barren of social interaction. They are information-driven, problem-oriented, and solution-based. No pleasantries. No backs slapped. We cut to the chase: I need this from you. Says Zimbardo, “You have to have an agenda.” Some people don’t even bother to show at the office at all; they telecommute (2016).

Carducci and Zimbardo also state “that the dwindling opportunities for face-to-face interaction put shy people at an increasing disadvantage. They no longer get to practice social skills within the comfort of daily routine” (2016, pg 7). Dropping by a colleague’s office to chat becomes increasingly awkward as you do it less and less. Social life has shrunk so much it can now be entirely encapsulated in a single, near-pejorative phrase: ‘face time,’ denoting the time employees may engage in eyeball-to-eyeball conversation. Electronic hand-held video games played solo now crowd out the time-honored social games of childhood. “Even electronically simulated social interactions can’t substitute—they do not permit people to learn the necessary give and take that is at the heart of all interpersonal relationships” (2016, pg 7).

If technology is ushering in a culture of shyness, it is also the perfect medium for the shy. The Internet and World Wide Web are conduits for the shy to interact with others; electronic communication removes many of the barriers that inhibit the shy. You prepare what you want to say. Nobody knows what you look like. The danger, however, is that technology will become a hiding place for those who dread social interaction. The first generation to go from cradle to grave with in-home computers, faxes, and the Internet is a long way from adulthood. We will have to wait at least another 20 years to accurately assess shyness in the wake of the new electronic age. But to do so, we must find a group of infants—shy and non-shy—and follow them through their life, rather than observe different people, from different generations, in different periods of their lives. Only then will we see the course of shyness over a lifetime (Carducci & Zimbardo, 2016).

What causes shyness? Actually, there is no one cause of shyness but many diverse causes including brain chemistry and reactivity (inborn temperament), harsh treatment from teachers or classmates, overprotective parents, faulty self-perceptions, poor adaptability, intolerance for ambiguity, physical appearance, life transitions (such as going to school, divorce, a new job), and even cultural expectations. Furthermore, some people are simply more sensitive about their behavior and are more easily embarrassed than others (Carducci, 2000; Casriel, 2007). According to Vitelli, research into shyness has suggested different causes including genetic influences, prenatal influences, environmental factors (including the effects of emotional abuse in childhood), or as the result of a traumatic social episode. While usually not severe enough to merit a diagnosis of social phobia or social anxiety, shyness can have a powerful effect on a person’s sense of well-being along with being linked to depression or other emotional problems due to isolation (2013). Research is ongoing between many cultures and whether different cultures accept shyness and parent children to be shy (Gudino and Lau, 2010).

Overcoming shyness. How can a person overcome shyness? It would be naive to pretend that shyness can be overcome easily. It is important, however, to emphasize that shyness can be overcome successfully. There are three steps in the process of dealing with shyness (Zimbardo, 1990; Pelusi, 2007). These steps are: 1) Analyzing your shyness, 2) Building your self-esteem, and 3) Improving your social skills.

Analyzing Your Shyness

- Try to pinpoint exactly what social situations tend to elicit your shy behavior. Or are you shy because your culture wants you to be respectful and it is mistaken for shyness like Native American or Asian cultures?
- Try to identify what causes your shyness in that situation. Use a diary or journal to keep track of the times you experience this feeling.
- Have a friend or relative give you feedback. Discuss how you interact with others and how you can improve.

Building Your Self-Esteem

- Recognize that you ultimately control how you see yourself.
- Set your own standards. Do not let others tell you how to live your life.
- Set realistic goals. Do not set your goals too high or too low. Many people demand too much of themselves.
- Talk positively to yourself. Tell yourself that you can do it and that you are a good person.
- Learn to take rejection. Rejection is one of the risks everyone takes in social interactions. Try not to take it personally; it may have nothing to do with you.

Improving Your Social Skills

- Follow a role model. Select someone you respect and observe how they interact. Imitate their behavior.
- Learn to listen. Smile.
- Talk to one new person every day about something.
- Volunteer at a place of interest to you.
- Reinforce yourself for each successful interaction.
- Use your imagination. Rehearse in your mind new situations—how you will respond.
- Practice with a friend—interviews, dating situations, etc.
- Find your comfort zone. Not all social situations are for everyone. Go where your interests are. You might be happier at an art gallery, book club, or on a volleyball team than you are at a cocktail party or bar.

Most of us feel that others will not tolerate emotional honesty in communication. We would rather defend our dishonesty on the grounds that it might hurt others; and having rationalized our phoniness into mobility, we settle for superficial relationships.
—JOHN POWELL

It takes time to change. Do not expect to overcome shyness overnight; it is a gradual process.

According to psychologist Bernardo Carducci (Casriel, 2007), conversation with strangers typically moves through five stages:

1. Opening line (keep it simple) and introductions,
2. Trying out topics and exploring for common ground,
3. Closing, in which you tell the person that you're going,
4. Summing up what you learned, and
5. Possibly exchanging contact information.

Remember, once you internalize these steps, you will always have a mental map of where to go next. Actually, shy people who are determined to develop their social skills can force themselves to interact despite the nervousness it provokes, and they can also end up garnering great satisfaction from the effort even if the bashfulness remains (Rodgers, 2006).

As we begin to reach out and meet new people in the process of overcoming shyness, we attempt to sift through the millions of people in the world to select the individuals that will eventually become our friends and lovers. How do we do this? We begin the process of getting acquainted and finding friends through *perceptual awareness*.

Perception refers to how we mentally organize and interpret the world around us. Because we all have different backgrounds and experiences, we perceive the world around us in different ways—and thus many of us misinterpret and misunderstand the people around us. We need to increase our perceptual awareness.

Perceptual Awareness

How can we prevent misunderstandings due to the inaccuracy of our own perceptions? Serious problems can arise when people accept their misinterpretations as if they were a fact of life while we tend to get upset with others when they jump to conclusions about our own behavior.

A friend says, “You really look tired today!” (You were feeling great until they said that.)

“What’s the matter with you today?” (Who said anything was wrong?)

“Why are you mad at me and not talking to me?” (You are concerned about your final exam that you are not prepared for.)

How can we become more aware of our misinterpretations and make people more aware of their personal perceptions? The *perceptual awareness process* will provide us with a technique that will help us deal with these misperceptions. What is this process?

- Make note of the **behavior you are observing**. Describe the behavior.
- **Interpret the behavior**. Why is that person acting that way? (Write down at least two interpretations.)
- Ask yourself what you would do in the same situation and look at their **point of view**. Put yourself in the other person’s “shoes.”
- Ask for **clarification** about how to interpret the behavior. Do not jump to conclusions. Ask the person why they are acting that way or ask someone else how they would interpret the situation.

You must find a way to get in the way and get in good trouble, necessary trouble. To save this little piece of real estate that we call earth for generations yet unborn. You have a moral obligation, a mission and a mandate when you leave here to go out and seek justice, for all. You can do it, you must do it.

—CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS

Fair isn't everybody getting the same thing... Fair is everybody getting what they need in order to be successful.

The perceptual awareness process will help us understand others more accurately instead of assuming that our first impression is correct. Our goal is a mutual understanding and acceptance of others.

Now, let us take a closer look at how we perceive the people we meet and interact with on a regular basis through the process called **people perception**. This section will be somewhat longer.

CONSIDER THIS

APPLICATION OF THE PERCEPTUAL AWARENESS PROCESS

Your roommate, Stephanie, has been quiet for the last two days and has not been talking to you (Behavior). You are sure that she is mad at you (First interpretation). She may have had a fight with her boyfriend (Second interpretation). Why would I be acting that way? (Put yourself in that situation.) Ask Stephanie, "Why have you been so quiet recently?" (Request for clarification).

Jim stomped out of the room and slammed the door (Behavior). Jim must have not liked what I said and got mad (First interpretation). Jim sure must be in a hurry and accidentally slammed the door (Second interpretation). "Why would I have acted that way?" (Put yourself in that situation). "Jim, how did you feel when you left the room yesterday?" (Request for clarification).

Think of some situations you have been in and go through this process.

People Perception

Imagine yourself alone at a large party that you are attending. You look around and see nothing but unfamiliar faces. As you look at each individual, you immediately make a judgment of what you think each person is like. Your perception of each individual is based on many things, such as your past experiences, prejudices, and stereotyping. Since your past experiences, prejudices, and stereotypes are different from those of others, your perception of each individual will be different from other people's interpretations. You may perceive someone as serious and studious while someone else may perceive the same individual as depressed and slow intellectually. Sometimes we discover that our perception is not always accurate. Initiating interactions is a valuable skill to have. Being open-minded is the best way to approach it. Some recent psychological studies indicate that our perception may be distorted at the time of perception because we are using our own past experiences, prejudices, and stereotyping to make the interpretation.

As we encounter people daily, we form an impression or perception of them. The term **social perception** describes the way we perceive, evaluate, categorize, and form judg-

ments about the qualities of people we encounter (Nevid, 2015). These *social perceptions* have a critical influence on our interactions. In fact, they are more important in guiding our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors than the actual traits or attitudes of the people around us. The factors that seem to influence our social perceptions are *first impressions*, *stereotyping*, and *prejudices*.

First impressions. First impressions can have a tremendous influence on our perception of others. The initial impression we have of another person may have a strong impact on our future interactions with them. If you go to a party and see someone that looks just like the boss that fired you last week, what is your impression of that person? What is the likelihood of you approaching that person? You will most likely avoid that person even though they seem to be very friendly and not at all like your boss. The *primacy effect* occurs when the first impression carries more weight than any subsequent information. That first impression of the person that looks like your previous boss will be difficult to change even if you see them in a new and different situation (Myers, 2013).

Our first impressions are formed quite rapidly—often within a matter of seconds. Research indicates that negative first impressions are often quickly formed and hard to overcome. This is why they say “getting off on the wrong foot” may be particularly damaging to a person (Hutson, 2016). The opposite tends to be true of positive first impressions, which are often hard to earn but easily lost. If the person you are going out with for the first time is late, what is your first impression? Would you think that he or she is unreliable and must be a flake since this is your first encounter—a negative first impression? Many of you would feel this way and this impression will be difficult to change. If your new date is on time are you willing to say that this person is reliable and conscientious? Research indicates that, indeed, an early wrong is the greater offense and can permanently cripple a relationship, even after repeated apologies (Hutson, 2016). Most of us will take more time to make that judgment even though the first impression was positive.

First Impressions—What do you notice first? While you are walking down the street one day, you notice a person whom you have never seen before. In your mind you immediately form an impression of what you think this person is like. What had the greatest impact on the formation of your opinion? Was it the way the person was dressed, their hairstyle, their size or shape, their facial expression, or their physical attractiveness? In the article “6 Myths about Men and Women and Relationships,” Gwen Seidman indicated that data reveals that *both* men and women think looks are important, with men rating it somewhat higher than women (Seidman, 2012). Some people feel that we seem to be influenced more by *physical appearance* than anything else. This may be due to the fact that mass media puts too much emphasis on these factors and, thus, has a great influence on our perception of the world. Wilbourne feels that in the psychology of impression management, it’s all about those first few seconds of an interaction. You know you’ll be judged, as you judge in turn, by what happens the moment you and a stranger see each other for the first time (Hutson, 2016).

Connection is critical because we all have the basic need to feel accepted and to believe that we belong and are valued for who we are.
—DR. BRENE BROWN

You never get a second chance to make a first impression
—GARY WILLIAMS

Other factors that seem to have an impact on our first impressions of others include what the individual is doing (their behavior) at the time you perceive them and what the **interactional possibilities** are with that person (whether or not they would be a good date, tennis partner, or study partner). If you see someone acting weird the first time you see them, what kind of person do you think he or she is? What will you think of that person the next time you see them? Most of us would continue to perceive them as weird, because of what we observed them doing the first time we saw them. If you see someone who you think would be fun to date, will you approach them? If you think the person sitting in the corner would help you study psychology, will you ask them to help you? If you perceive someone as “stuck-up,” or with an “attitude,” will you approach them? Based on your first impression of these individuals, you have already determined how you will respond or not respond to them. You are making your decision based on how you perceive the **interactional possibilities** (Aronson et al., 2015).

What about the impression you leave on the World Wide Web, your webpage and Facebook? Do you realize that any information you post on those sites is quite public and long-lasting? Do you realize that the public can see all the pictures taken in various stages of sobriety, etc. on Facebook? Do you realize that what you post may be the **first impression** someone has of you further down the road? Do you realize that employers might check the Internet to see what you have posted on various websites? The lesson is just think carefully—the Internet is available to millions of people—just think before you post.

Tolerance, Acceptance and Appreciation of Differences

Tolerance of people is a goal worthy of having when you are making friends. Tolerance is defined as a fair, objective, and permissive attitude toward those whose opinions, beliefs, practices, or racial or ethnic origins differ from one's own; freedom from bigotry (2016 Random House Dictionary). The following discussion can help you examine your attitudes and commit to any positive change. Keep your mind open to new ideas. Classifying people into social groups is called **social categorizing**. The categories are often based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, class, and gender. You can find yourself over-categorizing, and that is called **stereotyping**. (See the discussion below on stereotyping.) Social justice issues like racism, sexism, feminism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, and privilege need to be thought about so you can address societal issues with knowledge. Definitions are found in the glossary. Check out the Heroic Imagination Project that psychologist Phillip Zimbardo has researched. It is called the **Heroic Imagination Project** and it provides lessons and tools to encourage “**everyday heroism**,” or the power of individuals or networks of individuals to neutralize negative social influences—the genesis of the Heroic Imagination Project and its mission is