

The Self

- Complete the following sentence five times (different each time, does not need to be a single word):
- I am _____.

The self

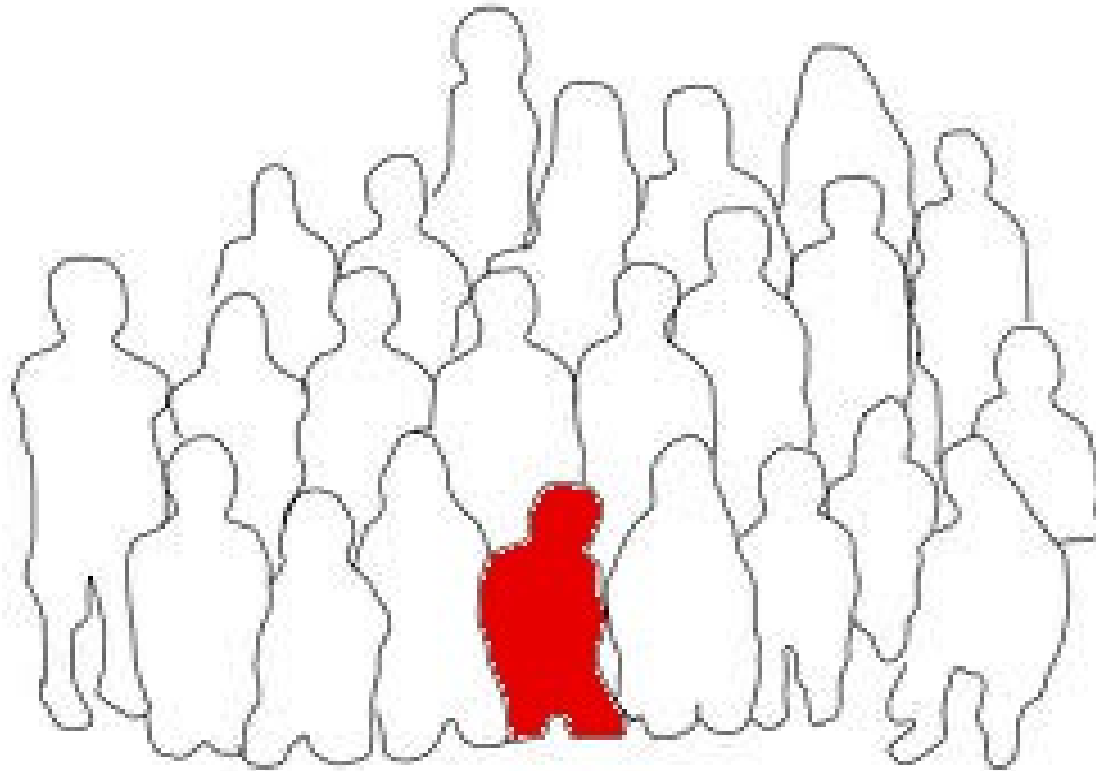
- *Self-concept* – individual's knowledge of who s/he is
- How we perceive ourselves depends on the situation, which affects where we fall (at that moment) on the *personal-social identity continuum*
- Personal and social identity
 - Personal - Think of self as a individual
 - Social - think of self as a member of a social group

The self

- Personal:
 - *Intragroup* - Compare self to other members of our social group
 - For example, whether you think of yourself as liberal or conservative depends on which group you are comparing yourself to (Canadians vs Americans; members of your circle of friends vs your parents friends)
 - We all have several groups that we could compare ourselves to, but we only make a few comparisons at a given time

The self

- “Compared to other people (in my group) I have these specific traits”

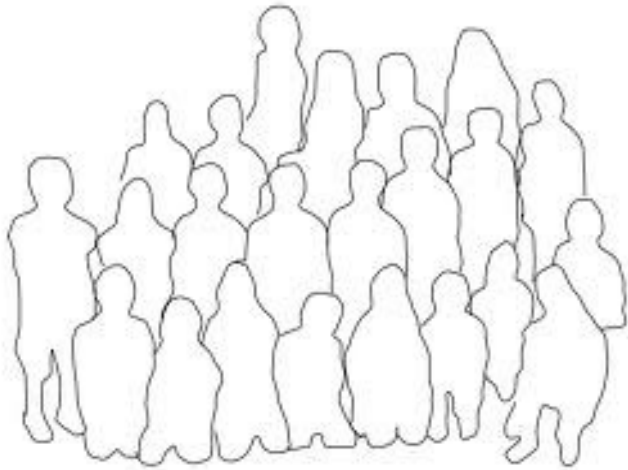


The self

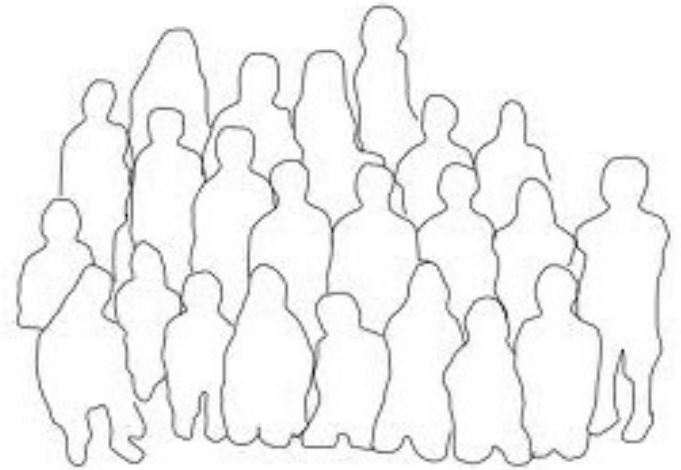
- Social
 - Think of self as a member of a social group
 - *Intergroup* - Compare self to members of other social groups
 - Define self in terms of attributes, attitudes, and behaviours that are shared by all members of our social group
 - Often occurs when we are prompted to think about our social group (For example, during the Olympics or while traveling, define self by national identity)

The self

- “I am a member of this group, which is different from other groups in this way”



US



THEM

Self-complexity

- Self-complexity (having several different aspects of the self) promotes resilience (Linville, 1985/1987)
 - When our sense of identity is threatened in one domain, having multiple other aspects of the self helps to reduce the perceived distress
- Among individuals who define their identity based on only one characteristic, when this aspect of self is threatened it provokes significant distress

Self-complexity

- Gardener
- Dancer
- Student
- Volunteer
- Best friend
- Amateur photographer

- Hockey fan
- Friend
- Student

- If these two people both failed a course at school, which would feel worse about herself?

Self-concept

- Identity interference – When multiple aspects of the self are in conflict with one another
 - Student and athlete
 - Parent and professional
- Perception of each role (expectations, attitudes, etc) might be based on stereotypes
 - Women vs men in leadership vs parenting
 - Members of minorities and certain academic fields

Self-concept

- Independent self-concept
 - Defining self as separate from other people
 - More common in individualistic cultures
 - More common in men than women
- Interdependent self-concept
 - Defining self based on relationships with others
 - More common in collectivist cultures
 - More common in women than men
- Either type of self-concept can be primed!
(Oyserman & Lee, 2008)

Self-concept

- Self-concept will differ based on the social context
- What aspects of your self-concept would be most salient in each of these situations?
 - Studying the library
 - Sitting with a friend at a coffee shop
 - Killing time on the Internet
 - Before your favourite team's big game
 - Around others of your culture
 - Around people of another culture

Self-concept

- “*Looking-glass self*” - Self-concept also depends on how others see us, react to us, and describe us
- If we anticipate being rejected by others, we can:
 - Hide that aspect of the self from view
 - Reveal that aspect of the self
 - Exaggerate that aspect of the self, making a statement of attitudes/values/etc
- Again, the social context affects our expectations and therefore our behaviour

Self-concept

- Implicit self-concept - Greenwald et al, 2002

Concept Contrasts for the Gender Self-Concept IAT

	Male versus Female		Self versus Other	
concepts	Male	Female	Self	Other
items	male man boy he sir	female woman girl she lady	I me my mine self	they them their theirs others

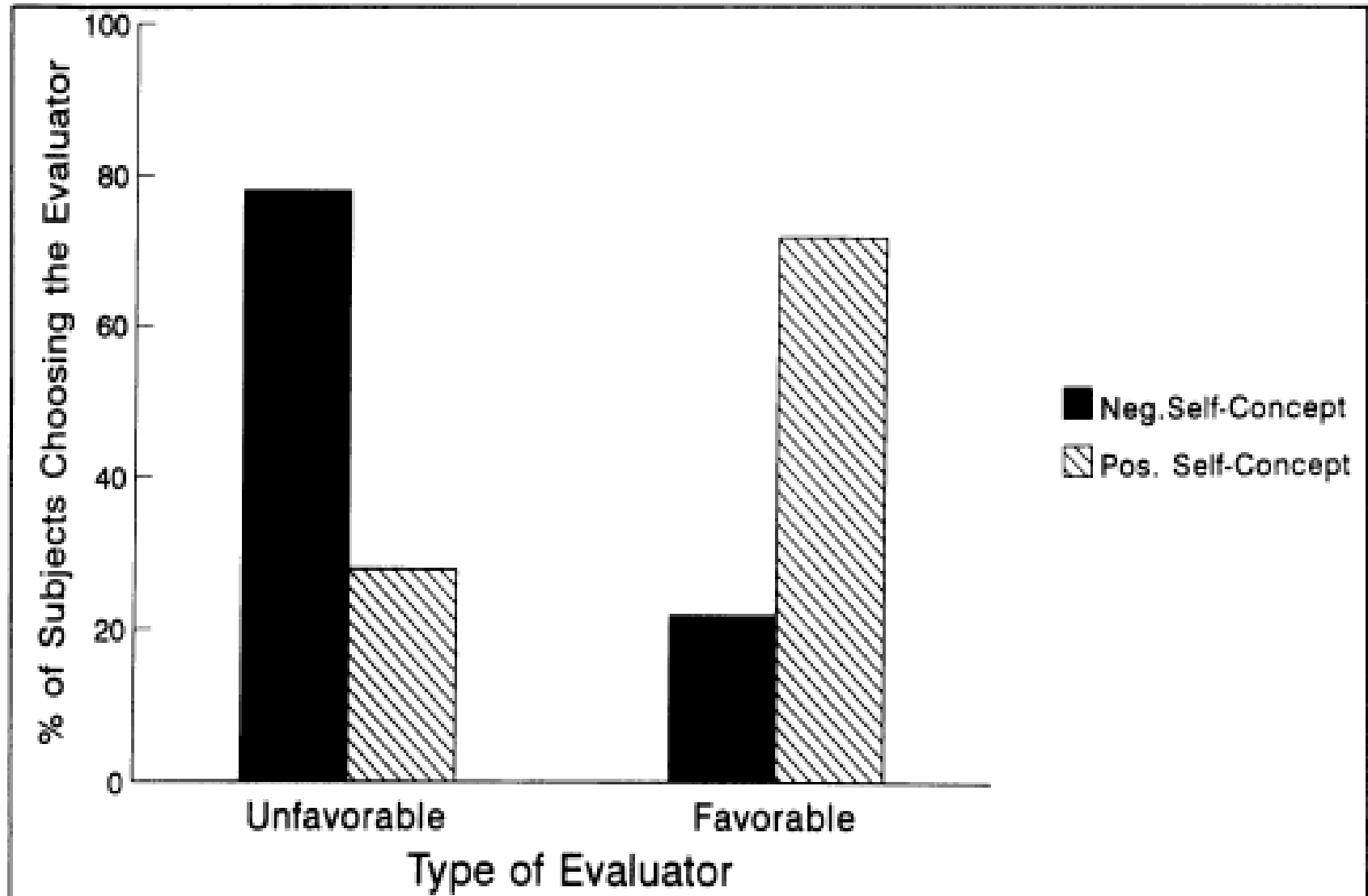
Sequence of Tasks for Gender Self-Concept IAT

Steps	Concepts for left response	Concepts for right response
1	Male	Female
2	Self	Other
3	Self or Male	Other or Female
4	Female	Male
5	Self or Female	Other or Male

Self-verification

- We tend to like and spend more time with people who agree with our self concept
- This is true, even if our self-concept is negative!
- Participants were given the choice of interacting with someone who had rated them favourably or unfavourably (Swann, 1992)

Self-verification



Self-schemas

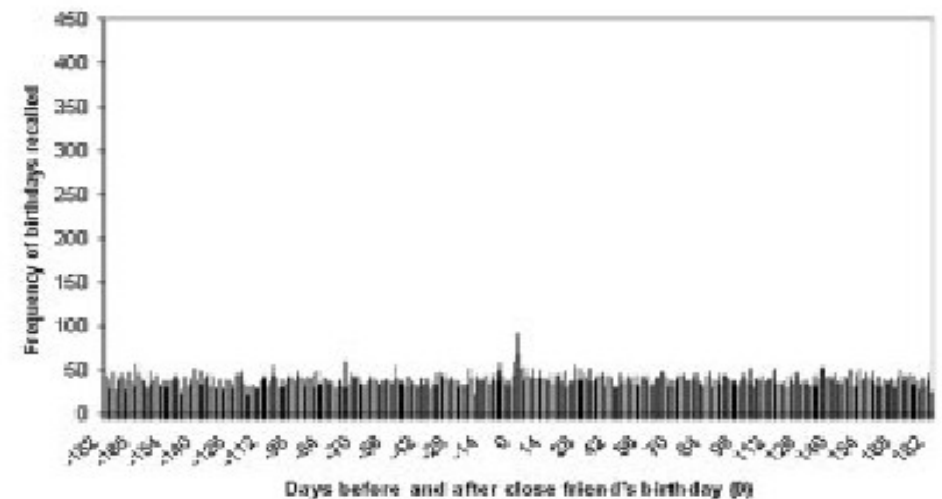
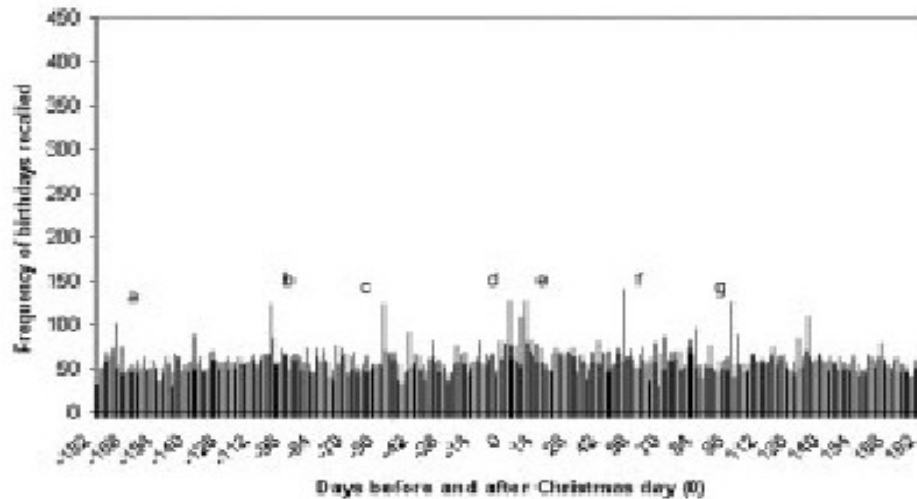
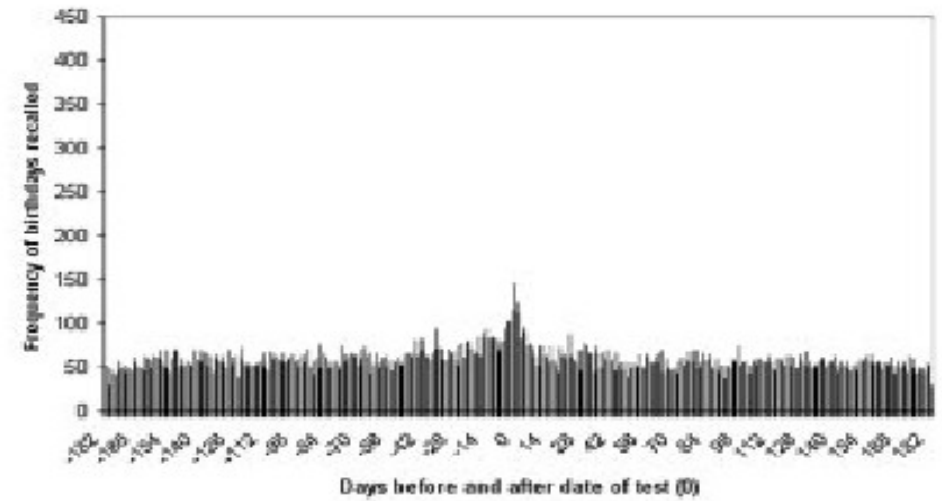
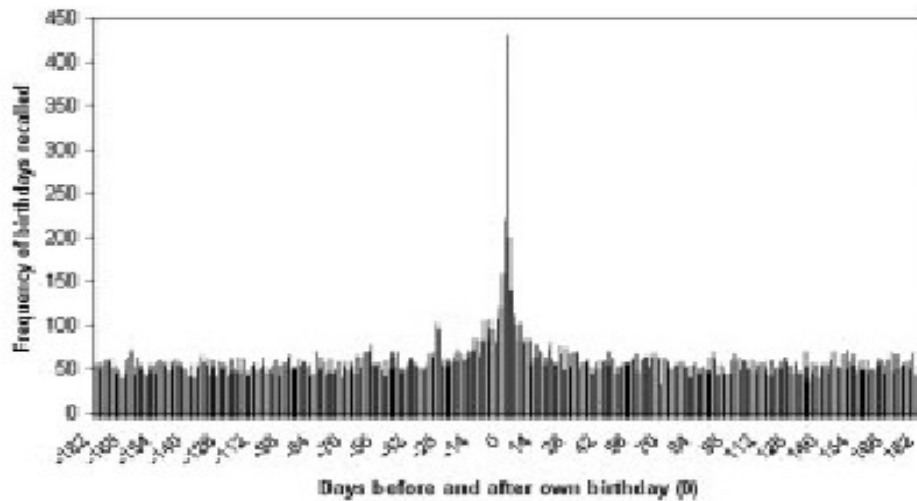
- Mental frameworks for organizing information, feelings and beliefs about the self
- An individual with the self-schema “active person” is more likely to exercise than someone with the self-schema “lazy person” (Banting et al, 2009)
 - Implicit and explicit self-schema

Self-schemas

- Remember how schemas affect what information we pay attention to and remember?
- *Self-reference effect* – we are better able to attend to and remember information that is relevant to ourselves
- This effect seems to be dependent on one brain region, the medial prefrontal cortex (Philippi et al, 2012; Wagner et al, 2012)

Self-schemas

- Rathbone & Moulin, 2010



Self-awareness

- The more we focus on ourselves, the more we become aware of our attitudes, personality, traits, schemas, etc
- Also become more aware of how our behaviour does or does not conform to that self-concept
- When self-concept and behaviour are inconsistent, we often look for ways to avoid thinking about the discrepancy
 - TV (Moskalenko & Heine, 2003) and video games (Li, Liao & Khoo, 2011) work particularly well for this
- Self-awareness by looking at Facebook has an opposite effect, enhancing self-esteem (Gonzales & Hancock, 2011)

Self-awareness

- Subjective self-awareness – recognition of self as separate from the outside world
 - Most animals, toddlers
- Objective self-awareness – recognition of self as an object of attention
 - Young children, chimpanzees, dolphins, elephants, some birds?
 - Mirror test
- Symbolic self-awareness – ability to express abstract representation of self through language
 - Children and adults

Possible selves

- A person's self-concept is not fixed for all time
- We expect to change and take on new roles in the future
- *Possible selves* – concepts of the self in the future, which can be positive or negative
- Thoughts about possible selves can increase or decrease the likelihood of various behaviours
 - Image of self as a sufferer of lung cancer
 - Image of self as a professional
 - Image of self as a parent

Self-efficacy

- *Self-efficacy* – the belief that one's action can result in the achievement of a goal
 - How much the individual believes s/he has the power to change outcomes
- Whether our behaviour changes in response to thoughts of possible selves depends in part on our sense of self-efficacy
- Very important concept in clinical psychology
 - In people with various mental illnesses, sense of self-efficacy is often very low, and early stages of therapy involve learning about capability to achieve goals

Self-esteem

- Overall positive or negative view of (attitude towards) the self
 - Changes with time, both in the short term and the long term
- Even though it is almost 50 years old, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) is still a widely used and studied measure of global self-esteem

Self-esteem

- 1 = Strongly Disagree ----- 4 = Strongly Agree
- _____ 1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- _____ 2. *At times I think I am no good at all.*
- _____ 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- _____ 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- _____ 5. *I feel I do not have much to be proud of.*
- _____ 6. *I certainly feel useless at times.*
- _____ 7. I feel that I'm a person of worth.
- _____ 8. *I wish I could have more respect for myself.*
- _____ 9. *All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.*
- _____ 10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Self-esteem

Factor Structure, Internal Reliability, and Metatraitdness of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale Within 53 Nations

Nation	Principal component loadings										% variance explained	Cronbach alpha	Guttman split-half	Metatraitdness Index
	Q1	Q2	Q3 ^a	Q4	Q5 ^a	Q6	Q7	Q8 ^a	Q9 ^a	Q10 ^a				
Argentina	.48	.63	.67	.63	.37	.67	.69	.53	.65	.73	36.6	.79	.69	1.55
Australia	.69	.71	.73	.62	.76	.79	.75	.69	.73	.73	52.1	.89	.82	1.78
Austria	.56	.60	.69	.67	.64	.71	.69	.64	.68	.68	43.1	.85	.76	1.84
Bangladesh	.85	.84	.54	.79	.65	.89	.79	-.48	.37	.14	45.6	.79	.70	1.27
Belgium	.75	.66	.75	.61	.76	.82	.80	.69	.68	.71	52.5	.89	.86	1.77
Bolivia	.46	.64	.54	.66	.36	.69	.65	.08	.61	.49	30.0	.70	.65	1.31
Botswana	.55	.64	.64	.41	.66	.52	.63	.29	.50	.51	29.8	.72	.64	1.29
Brazil	.69	.68	.74	.48	.79	.54	.66	.37	.45	.53	37.0	.79	.67	1.65
Canada	.68	.66	.67	.47	.58	.73	.52	.59	.35	.70	36.6	.80	.79	1.57
Chile	.60	.67	.74	.60	.24	.74	.73	.53	.66	.75	41.4	.80	.67	1.66
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	.54	.61	.35	.49	.16	.56	.67	-.58	.31	.47	24.6	.45	.53	1.09
Croatia	.52	.55	.66	.54	.62	.75	.71	.63	.73	.73	42.1	.84	.71	1.85
Cyprus	.57	.65	.79	.63	.71	.83	.77	.69	.71	.67	49.6	.88	.82	1.57
Czech Rep.	.66	.58	.58	.66	.70	.77	.69	.41	.59	.62	40.1	.83	.76	1.67
Estonia	.64	.69	.80	.68	.80	.81	.78	.50	.60	.67	49.5	.87	.86	1.72
Ethiopia	.40	.48	.48	.55	.37	.45	.60	.33	.57	.74	26.0	.64	.64	1.35
Fiji	.58	.69	.41	.56	.53	.65	.57	.40	.54	.68	31.9	.76	.64	1.42
Finland	.76	.69	.73	.68	.70	.78	.61	.65	.55	.60	46.1	.86	.77	2.05
France	.64	.57	.60	.37	.68	.75	.75	.48	.62	.71	39.4	.82	.76	1.66
Germany	.66	.64	.74	.60	.61	.78	.74	.72	.75	.76	49.3	.88	.81	2.04
Greece	.58	.68	.77	.65	.52	.76	.73	.67	.72	.66	45.9	.86	.73	1.67
Hong Kong	.45	.59	.60	.60	.53	.76	.66	.31	.69	.65	35.7	.79	.73	1.81
India	.45	.55	.69	.64	.62	.72	.63	.37	.71	.71	38.3	.81	.73	1.59
Indonesia	.51	.66	.77	.58	.62	.68	.51	-.12	.75	.63	38.0	.78	.72	1.56
Israel	.76	.75	.80	.72	.72	.80	.81	.53	.73	.70	54.4	.90	.83	1.86
Italy	.64	.69	.48	.57	.50	.75	.73	.52	.70	.66	39.6	.82	.68	1.57
Japan	.70	.74	.58	.57	.70	.64	.52	.04	.78	.73	39.9	.81	.75	1.60
Latvia	.59	.57	.67	.47	.55	.82	.69	.49	.64	.66	38.8	.82	.72	1.77
Lebanon	.54	.53	.66	.58	.69	.65	.66	.61	.62	.61	38.0	.82	.72	1.63
Lithuania	.50	.48	.72	.41	.56	.68	.69	.48	.65	.40	32.2	.75	.66	1.52

- Schmitt et al, 2005

Self-esteem

- Implicit self-esteem - Greenwald et al, 2002

Self	Other	Positive	Negative
myself	other	rainbow	pain
mine	them	happy	death
me	their	smile	poison
my	they	joy	grief
myself	them	warmth	agony
self	other	pleasure	sickness
		paradise	tragedy
		sunshine	vomit

Self-esteem

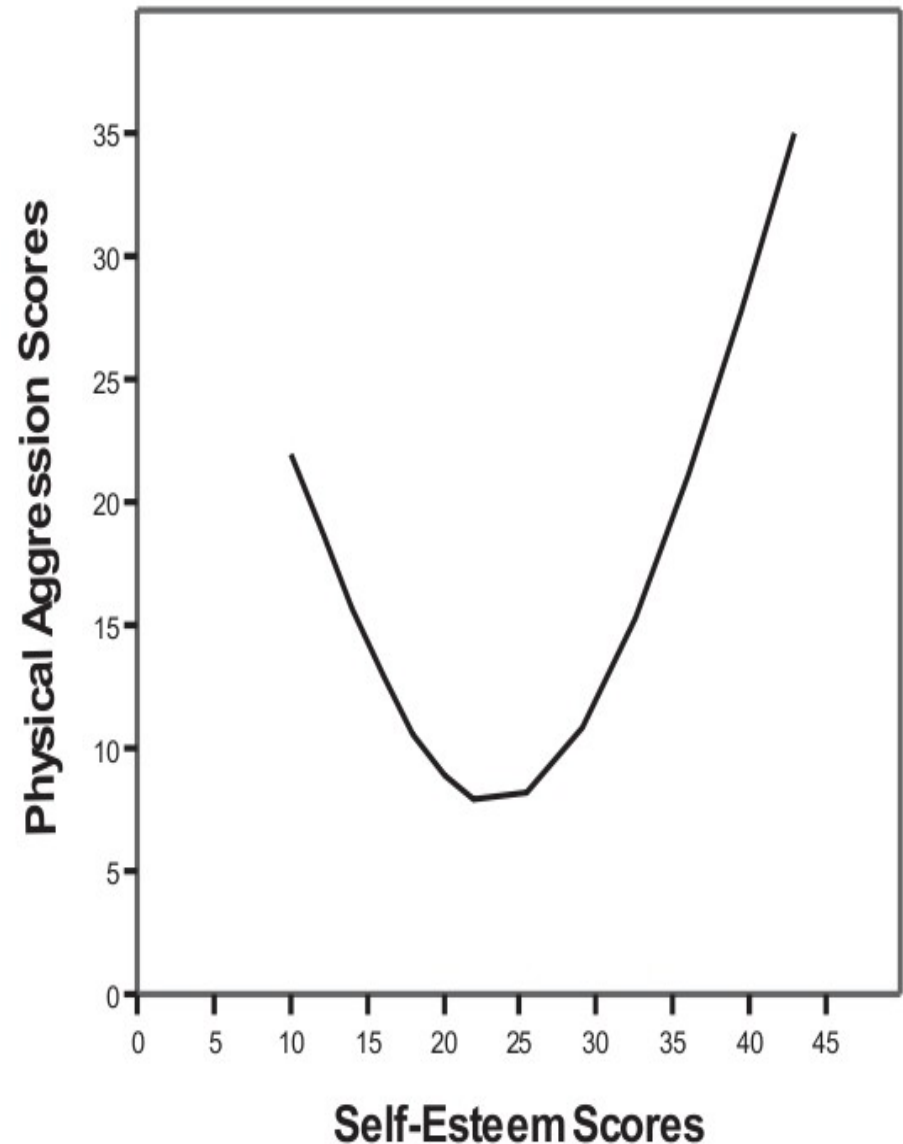
- State self-esteem
 - Momentary feelings about the self
- Fairly easily changed:
 - Perceived success or failure
 - Reminders of past failure
 - Being excluded
 - Having undesirable traits made salient

Self-esteem

- We use a number of biases to help maintain our self-esteem
 - Above-average effect (related to the optimistic bias)
 - Self-serving bias
 - False uniqueness effect (I am special because I am different)
 - False consensus effect (I am right because others agree with me)

Self-esteem

- Perez et al, 2005
- High self-esteem is not always a good thing
- Discrepancy between explicit and implicit self-esteem



Self-esteem

- Very high self-esteem can result in narcissism
- Genuine self-esteem, confidence, and authentic pride in accomplishments → better mental health and social relationships
- Narcissistic self-aggrandizement, arrogance, and hubristic pride → antisocial behaviour and aggression (Tracy et al, 2009)

Self-esteem

- In western countries, women generally have lower self-esteem than men
- Individuals from collectivist cultures have lower self-esteem than people from individualist cultures
 - Only for explicit self-esteem, there is little difference when using implicit measures (Yamaguchi et al, 2007)

Social comparison

- *Social comparison theory* - when uncertain about our performance we often compare ourselves to others
- Common when there is no objective measure of how well we are doing
- For example:
 - Am I in the right job?
 - Am I well enough educated?
 - Am I happy enough with my partner?
 - Am I successful enough in life?
 - Am I a good parent?
 - Did I do well enough on this test/assignment/class?

Social comparison

- Downward social comparison – improves self-esteem by comparing self to someone who is less capable
 - Taking a class that is below your level
 - Feels good
 - Unrealistically positive view of self?
- Upward social comparison – lowers self-esteem by comparing self to someone who is more capable
 - Comparing self to very high achieving friends
 - Motivating
 - Unrealistically negative view of self?

Social comparison

- Choice of comparison group makes a difference in the effect of social comparison
 - The more similar the group is to us, the more realistic and the more positive the comparison is likely to be
 - Do most amateur athletes compare themselves to Olympians, and would this be realistic?

Social comparison

- Self-evaluation maintenance model
- When comparing the self to other individuals in the same group (ie: other students in this class), most people like to be near people who perform worse
 - Downward social comparison

Social comparison

- Social identity theory
- When thinking about the self as a member of a particular group (students working together on a group project), we like others around us to perform well and avoid those who perform poorly
 - Upwards social comparison
 - *Black sheep effect* – rejecting poor performing group members

Self-monitoring

- Paying attention to behaviour in response to other's reactions
- How much do you adjust your behaviour in response to the expected reactions of the people around you?
- Some people's personality is more “fluid” than others

Self-monitoring

- Self-monitoring is the strongest predictor of misrepresentation on online dating sites (Hall et al, 2010)

TABLE 1
Results of simultaneous regression analyses for the topics of misrepresentation

Predictors	Dependent variables						
	Personal assets	Relationship goals	Personal interests	Personal attributes	Past relationships	Weight	Age
	Beta						
Self-monitoring other-directed	.18*	.19*	.21*	.16*	.22*	.14*	.07*
Self-monitoring actor	-.02	.03	.01	-.02	-.05	-.01	-.01
Neuroticism	.03	.06	.03	.04	.05	.05	.01
Extraversion	.01	-.01	-.08*	-.06	.07*	.06	-.01
Conscientiousness	-.07*	-.07*	-.07*	-.05	-.05	-.06	-.03
Agreeableness	-.07*	-.09*	-.06*	-.15*	-.10*	.01	-.06*
Openness	-.04	-.08*	-.10*	-.05	-.05	-.05	.01
Education	-.01	.07*	.06*	.05	.02	.04	.03
Income	-.01	-.02	.01	-.03	.06*	-.03	.02
<i>F</i>	34.86*	56.46*	65.39*	58.40*	50.95*	19.38*	8.49*
<i>R</i> ²	.07	.10	.12	.11	.09	.04	.02

Note: * $p < .001$.

Self-monitoring

- If a statement is true or mostly true as applied to you, mark “t” to the left of the statements. If a statement is false or not usually true as applied to you, mark an “f”
- ___ 1. I find it hard to imitate the behaviour of other people.
- ___ 2. My behaviour is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.
- ___ 3. At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.
- ___ 4. I can only argue for ideas that I already believe.
- ___ 5. I can make impromptu speeches even on topics about which I have almost no information.
- ___ 6. I guess I put on a show to impress or entertain people.
- ___ 7. When I am uncertain how to act in a social situation, I look to the behaviour of the others for cues.
- ___ 8. I would probably make a good actor.
- ___ 9. I rarely seek the advice of my friends to choose movies, books, or music.
- ___ 10. I sometimes appear to others to be experiencing deeper emotions than I actually am.
- ___ 11. I laugh more when I watch a comedy with others than when alone.
- ___ 12. In a group of people I am rarely the center of attention.

Self-monitoring

- ___ 13. Indifferent situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.
- ___ 14. I am not particularly good at making other people like me.
- ___ 15. Even if I am not enjoying myself; I often pretend to be having a good time.
- ___ 16. I'm not always the person I appear to be.
- ___ 17. I would not change my opinions (or the way I do things) in order to please someone else or win their favour.
- ___ 18. I have considered being an entertainer.
- ___ 19. In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else.
- ___ 20. I have never been good at games like charades or improvisational acting.
- ___ 21. I have trouble changing my behaviour to suit different people and different situations.
- ___ 22. At a party, I let others keep the jokes and stories going.
- ___ 23. I feel a bit awkward in company and do not show up quite as well as I should.
- ___ 24. I can look anyone in the eye and tell a lie with a straight face (if for a right end).
- ___ 25. I may deceive people by being friendly when I really dislike them.

Self-handicapping

- Self-handicapping is a way to protect our self-esteem and self-image when we anticipate failure
 - Not reading the textbook when a student is unsure of the ability to pass a course
 - Not participating actively in therapy when a patient feels hopeless about recovery
 - Binge drinking the night before a race