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Identity

Who you are and how you think of yourself is called your **identity**. It is always important to know yourself in order to make the best choices for your life. This in turn will help you succeed at whatever you choose to do. However, once you do know yourself, you will find that your identity continually changes throughout life, sometime really quickly. You can look forward to lots of **identity evolution**. Furthermore you will see that the changes in your identity are often fluid, i.e. can change back and forth at various times, even day to day! Therefore, it is important to watch your own identity. **Dreams** often help you stay aware of changes in your identity. Keep an eye on your dreams to see what you can learn about yourself as you change from child to adults at age 18.

During high school, some of you will visibly change a lot and other less so. Listen carefully to what people *tell* you about how they see you. These remarks may be spontaneous or said in response to your own self-descriptions or questions e.g. "how do I look?" Listen to what others say about themselves. This will provide you with perspective on their opinions of you, and then you can evaluate their feedback in this context. This is how you can learn about yourself and **your persona or image**, whether or not **others' impressions** are consistent with **your view of yourself or your identity**. When your views differ from the views of others, always consider how you might be giving a misleading impression of yourself. This will give you an opportunity to modify your behavior should you choose to do so. Friends can often help each other reconcile their image with their sense of themselves by using kind, tactful, honest and clear feedback.

Consider an adult you know with some discrepancies between his/her sense of self, your perception of that adult, or his/her public personalities. What does this make you feel? Think? How do you judge it? Is any action appropriate?

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