

## Your Self-Concept

Your career also influences your self-concept. Your self-concept is your own view of yourself, your personal values and beliefs, and the ways you relate to other people. It's how you describe and evaluate yourself; it's all your thoughts, feelings, and opinions about who you are. Your self-concept can change, even day to day. When people succeed at something, they feel good about themselves; when they make mistakes, they might feel bad about themselves. The people you know affect your self-concept, too. People often judge themselves based on how others see them, so when someone compliments or criticizes you, your opinion of yourself can change. All of these feelings are normal.

A large part of your self-concept is your self-esteem. Self-esteem is the respect or favorable view you have of yourself. Having a high self-esteem can give you the confidence to handle all the pressures of daily life. These same pressures, however, can further weaken someone with low self-esteem.

In terms of your career, your self-concept is how you see yourself when you consider your performance in school, your job within a company, your relationships with management and coworkers, and your successes and setbacks throughout your entire career.

Your self-concept in turn also affects your career choices. People often choose occupations that allow them to express their self-concept. For example, someone who is proud of her own responsibility, integrity, and sense of justice may become a detective, probation officer, or FBI agent to express those values. As a worker in law enforcement, she would see herself as a person who helps protect other members of society. A person who loves to draw and publicly display his artwork may become a multimedia artist in films to express his talent. As a worker in the movie industry, he would see himself as someone who makes other people happy by entertaining them.

It's important to have a healthy self-concept, which is knowing what defines you, knowing and accepting your strengths and weaknesses, and finding ways to improve yourself. It's also realizing that no one is perfect and everyone makes mistakes.

One of the most important ways to having a healthy self-concept is to choose a career that's right for you. Keep in mind, though, that there's no such thing as a "perfect" career or job. Choosing the right career means finding one that fits your personality and helps you meet your professional and personal life goals.



**Teenagers often make choices according to their friends' opinions.**