

## IDENTITY AND PERSONAL EXCELLENCE 1 OF 3

### Some distortions of self-worth & self-esteem & self-identity

**Resonance:** The experience of enhanced, stimulated and yet relaxed vitality that you can experience in interaction with particular others and particular environments. (From Herb Shepard)

Four pervasive cultural themes can be identified as cripplers of the capacity for resonance:  
**ADVERSARIALISM -- MATERIALISM -- SEXISM -- VIOLENCE**

#### YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK THAT YOU ARE:

My role is to... to be a wife, mother, homemaker  
to be a husband, father, breadwinner  
to provide every protection for...  
to be tough to get things done...

#### YOU ARE WHAT YOU FEEL THAT YOU ARE:

I feel bad without a better house, car,...  
I feel good with my position of power,...  
I'm happiest when I'm working, at home,...

#### YOU ARE WHAT YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU ARE:

**PERSONAL BELIEFS:** "He who dies with the most toys wins!"  
**SEXUAL BELIEFS:** "I am gay, straight, macho, enslaved, liberated..."  
**FAMILY BELIEFS:** "You can't trust people outside the family"  
**RELIGIOUS BELIEFS:** "It is better to give than to receive"  
**CULTURAL BELIEFS:**  
**HISTORICAL:** "Violence is as American as apple pie"  
**ADVERTISING:** "Collectibles are a way of life"  
**BUSINESS:** "Winning isn't everything, its the only thing"  
**SPORTS:** "It's not how you play the game, its only winning"

Being in "tune" (resonance) with yourself and others can be damaged and hampered by distortions. Some of the most common are:

**WIN-LOSE** The competitive stance says that we have to be always on the lookout for ourselves, on the defense or the offense, - fight or flight - watch out !

**I AM (SOME SOCIAL ROLE)** being a nurse, doctor, Indian chief, mother, father, class clown, thrower-of-oil-on-troubled-waters, can develop into a lifetime act that cuts you off from other parts of your self, and hence, from other people.

**I AM A RATIONAL BEING** We all have a body and feelings associated with our body. To disregard the importance of our and others feelings invites a lot of stress.

**I AM MY GENDER** Being a male or female is a wonder of nature and joy to experience to make it the major source of our identity is to invite all manner of limitations and confrontations with other males and females, gay or straight, old or young, big or small, who may, sometimes, believe the same way !

**I AM THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIGHT** Sorry, there is only one of those. Other people think, feel, believe, and know different things than you. If you don't pay attention to that, and give value to that, you will invite win-lose problems.



**OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.**