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## Personal Image: A Mirror to Know Yourself

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### Abstract:

*Betterment in life has always been the point of prior discussion. But how to proceed towards betterment is also a matter of concern. Today man is beset with different problems in his life. Most of the problems are so critical and serious that he feels it impossible to get out of them. As a result of this, he develops a negative self-image and can never come out of it. Here through these columns, we are trying to highlight the reality that he can frame his life according to his desire by giving a new shape to himself as well as his personality and develop a Residual Self-Image. Self-image designing is becoming very popular in the modern world especially in the corporate field. It is the way by which an individual can reshape and redesign his overall personality and overcome almost every problem in his life as well as in others'. His intelligence, his morality, attitude, decision making ability, culture, religion his conceptual skills about life, his background are responsible behind his image design and thereby his personality. By following the principles of SWOT analysis he can design his image according to his desire and the requirement of the modern world and necessities and proceed towards the betterment in life.*

**Key words:** Self-image designing Reshape and Redesign personality, Attitude, Intelligence, SWOT analysis, Residual Self-Image.

## **Introduction:**

Life is full of hot and cold. And everyone in this universe has to bear both. But here we don't mean to say, that one should compromise with what he gets in his life or what is in store for him. It is totally in his hands to try for betterment. But unfortunately, most of us do not try and keep compromising with what they are given by the time. Numerous quotations and thoughts have been given by different intellectuals and motivators for the betterment and shaping one's life. This shaping is possible by monitoring and reshaping the internal and external qualities or skills of an individual. This is how he can grave his self-image as well as his image before others. Self-image designing plays a significant role in reshaping and reorganizing the qualities of an individual.

This is how an individual's personality becomes magnetic and attractive or a negative or a neglected one. Now it totally depends upon that individual how he shapes his personality and thereby his image and self-image.

## **What is Self- Image?**

Self -image of a person is the mental picture that is generally resilient to change. A self- image includes an individual's potential that he has in him what he learns about himself. This learning may be either from his personal experience or by internalizing the judgments made by others. On the basis of this, it can be said that self- image is how a person sees himself besides the fact that how others see him. Moreover it is also resulting how he perceives others see him.

## **Types of Self-Image**

Self-image can be of the following three types:

- i. Residual Self Image
- ii. Temporary Self-Image
- iii. Poor Self-Image

Those people, who have Residual or Positive Self-Image, are accustomed to projecting. Wherever they are come across, they automatically reveal their self-image and leave a positive and magnetic impact upon his surroundings. This is also known as Permanent Self-Image. Some people try to show their image according to the situation. Actually they have no such permanent self-image and that is why the people with this type of self-image are caught very often. This type of self-image is known as Temporary Self-Image. It may be helpful in winning the people for a specific time and does not have a longer impact and it is sometimes debunked. There is another category of people. They have a self-image that is the result of all the accumulated criticisms that the person collects as a child which have led him to their own view about themselves. Children in particular are vulnerable to accepting negative judgment from others because they don't have that much competency in evaluating others. This sometimes triggers off social disorder. This type of self-image is known as Negative Self-Image.

### **Reasons of Negative or Poor Self-Image:**

Many people have poor or negative self image. They always keep considering themselves inferior to other. And consequently, they can never win the people and always remain in gloomy world. Such people are always remain in the world where there is nothing but dark. This is really a very serious problem and needs immediate solution. There can be many reasons behind the negative self-image of the person. Here are some...

- i. Continuous Failures: Sometimes, because of continuous failures, he may develop a negative attitude for himself and thereby a negative self-image.
- ii. Setting high standards of success: Even a perfectionist may develop negative self- image because generally such people set the standard for success high above the attainable levels. Thus they are constantly disappointed with their 'failures' and are more prone to having negative self-image.
- iii. Lack of high morale: Many individuals lack high morale and always keep counting their failures and disappointments . These people need continuous encouragement and morale boost up.

- iv. Criticism: Sometimes, continuous criticism also leads a person to negative and gloomy world. It is the thing which most of the people don't understand. Instead of criticizing, such people should be given time to time proper guidance and care.
- v. Lack of Stickiness and Determination: Most of the people set goals but they are not determined or stick to them. They keep changing their goals and reach nowhere and thus develop a negative self- image.
- vi. All-or-nothing thinking. Some people see things as either all good or all bad. For example, "If I don't succeed in this task, I'm a total failure."
- vii. Converting positives into negatives. Some people reject their achievements and other positive experiences by insisting that they don't count. For example, "I only did well on that test because it was so easy."
- viii. Jumping to negative conclusions. We reach a negative conclusion when little or no evidence supports it. For example, "My friend hasn't replied to my email, so I must have done something to make her angry."
- ix. Negative self-talk. We undervalue ourselves, put ourselves down or use self-deprecating humor. This can result from overreacting to a situation, such as making a mistake. For example, "I don't deserve anything better."

### **Person and Personality:**

In order to design the self-image of a person it is important to know the 'Person' first. What is the 'Person' and what does it mean by 'Personality'. Man lives in society. Perhaps this is the reason that he is known as the social animal. He is different from the other animals because of some qualities that are not seen in other animals. According to Sir David Barlow<sup>1</sup>, the interaction in society takes place between two individuals, two groups, individual and group or vice versa. But in both sides, there will be a person. Person means one who possess some qualities like, Intelligence, Aptitude, Attitude, Knowledge, Communication skills, Behaviour, Morality, Ethics, Culture and Religion, Learning Style, Back ground (Social, Family and Educational) etc. These can be considered as the influencing factors of an individual's personality. Now the proper combination of

these qualities makes his personality an attractive and magnetic one otherwise, a negative one. Now the question arises what is personality? Personality is the combination of the above mentioned qualities. Morton Prince<sup>2</sup> defines it as “Personality is the sum of all the biological innate dispositions, impulses, tendencies, aptitudes and instincts of the individual and the acquired disposition and tendencies.” According to May and Hartshorn<sup>3</sup>, “Personality is something that which makes an individual effective and enables him to influence over others.” Personality is determined by the heredity, brain, family background, social groups, situation, cultural factor, physical features etc. Personality has different dimensions like Physical, Mental, Financial, Social, Emotional and Spiritual etc. According to an anonymous saying, “*We all have an in -build” self – image. The wonderful thing is that we can change it.*”

### **The General Tendency of a Person:**

Self-image is a product of learning. Early childhood influences, such as parents and care-givers, significantly influence our self-image. They are mirrors reflecting back to us an image of ourselves. Our experiences with others such as teachers, friends, and family add to the image in the mirror. Relationships reinforce what we think and feel about ourselves. The image we see in the mirror may be a real or distorted view of who we really are. Based on this view, we develop either a positive or a negative self-image. According to Mr. Joginder Singh<sup>4</sup> as he wrote in his book in its Hindi version, “Every person has two dogs in his mind. Neither of the two wants to live with the other and keeps fighting with the other.” When asked who wins? He simply replies “The one whom you feed” Absolutely correct. Our image depends what we think of ourselves.

The strengths and weaknesses we have internalised affect how we act today. We continually take an information and evaluate ourselves in multiple domains such as physical appearance (How do I look?), performance (How am I doing?), and relationships (How important am I?). With a positive self-image, we recognize and own our assets and potentials while being realistic about our liabilities and limitations. With a negative self-image, we focus on our faults and weaknesses, distorting failure and imperfections.

### **How to design a Self-image?**

In order to design one's self-image one has to evaluate his SWOT, i.e. His Strengths, His Weaknesses, His Opportunities and His Threats. The first two are an individual's internal skills whereas the other two are external ones. Strengths strengthen our profile and are the reasons why we are liked and loved. Weaknesses create problems in our path and weaken our profile. Opportunities help us to overcome our weakness. But at the same time, Threats don't let us stand in a good mood. They create obstacles in our success. Now in order to design one's own image we should enlist all his Strengths, Weaknesses, our opportunities and finally our Threats.

### **How to start?**

Self-Image designing is not a one night job. It needs some essential changes in ourselves. These changes are...

- i. Love yourself: Love begins with you first. So, instead of being criticised in your own eyes, learn to love yourself.
- ii. Challenge negative and inaccurate thinking: For example never say "I did well in that particular work because it was so easy. Rather, say I did well because I did it in a smarter and better way that no one else could have done it in a better manner.
- iii. Use hopeful and positive statements. Treat yourself with kindness and encouragement. Pessimism can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. For example, if you think your presentation isn't going to go well, you might indeed stumble through it. Try telling yourself things such as, "Even though it's tough, I can handle this situation." Believe, "I WILL TRY" these three words have done wonders.
- iv. Forgive yourself. As it is said that even a good horse stumbles, everyone commits some or other mistake sometime or the other in life. So, you are not an exception. Moreover, mistakes aren't permanent reflections on you as a person because they are isolated moments in time. Instead tell yourself, "I made a mistake, but that doesn't make me a bad person."

- v. Re-label upsetting thoughts. You don't need to react negatively to negative thoughts. Instead, think of negative thoughts as signals to try new, healthy patterns. Ask yourself, "What can I think and do to make this less stressful?"
- vi. Encourage yourself. Give yourself credit for making positive changes. For example, "My presentation might not have been perfect, but my colleagues asked questions and remained engaged — which means that I accomplished my goal." If possible try to give yourself a possible gift after every small success of yours

### **How to make our SWOT Analysis?**

- i. First enlist all the qualities from each and every dimension of personality.
- ii. Keep shining all your positive qualities and strengths. Mind, *'Stagnate water gets spoiled'*
- iii. Now enlist all your weaknesses from all the dimensions
- iv. Now divide all your weaknesses into two categories, Changeable and Unchangeable
- v. Now the very next step is to delete all the unchangeable qualities. Because these qualities are of no use for us'.

*Then why should we to think and take pains for these absurd things.*

Now, just begin with the changeable weaknesses from all the dimensions in the following manner...

- i. Think where you are standing right now.
- ii. Decide where do you want to reach at the end of this journey?
- iii. Make 'To Do Lists' and an 'Action Plan' and follow it strictly. Gift yourself a nice gift after every success of yours.
- iv. Do not forget to take your own feedback daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly or even yearly.

Continue this for some weeks and realise a beautiful and miraculous change in yourself.

### **Conclusion**

Personality is not to become physically strong or mentally intelligent. It is the proper balance and required overall improvement of an individual. Now these improvements are based on the dimensions of personality and its determining factors. Life is the most beautiful gift of God for us. Many essential and perhaps the most wonderful things like love, affection, family, religion, culture, friendship, friends, relatives etc. are absolutely free for us in our lives. We should try to realise their significance and try to use them for our good and uplift. Image and self-image designing both the things are in our own hands. It needs strong desire to shape the image and keen determination, plan and hard work. Instead of making it just a temporary thing, we should try to make it a permanent and inseparable part of our personality.

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