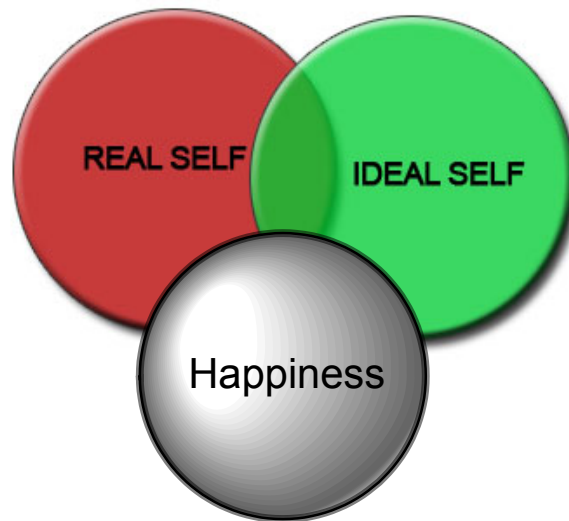


Happiness Deception-003 and 004



Happiness is a state of mind or feeling characterized by contentment, love, satisfaction, pleasure, or joy.[1] A variety of biological, psychological, religious, and philosophical approaches have striven to define happiness and identify its sources.

Positive psychology researchers use theoretical models that include describing happiness as consisting of positive emotions and positive activities, or that describe three kinds of happiness:

Pleasure [S C M],
Engagement [A P], and
Meaning [R].

Happiness

Research has identified a number of attributes that correlate with happiness:

Relationships and social interaction [A],

Extraversion [A],

Marital status [A S],

Employment [M A P],

Health [C],

Democratic freedom [P],

Optimism [C],

Endorphins released through physical exercise and eating chocolate [C],

Religious involvement [R],

Income [M] and

Proximity to other happy people [A C].

Happiness Potential:

1. About 50% of individual happiness comes from a *genetic set point*. That is, we're each predisposed to a certain level of happiness. Some of us are just naturally more inclined to be cheery than others.

2. About 10% of our happiness is due to our *circumstances*. Our age, race, gender, personal history, and, yes, wealth, only make up about one-tenth of our happiness.

3. The remaining 40% of an individual's happiness seems to be derived from *intentional activity*, from "discrete actions or practices that people can choose to do". - getrichslowly.org

"What does *not* bring happiness?

Money, and the pursuit of happiness for its own sake.

"A vast array of individuals seriously over-rate the importance of money in making themselves, and others, happy," Montier writes.

"Study after study from psychology shows that money doesn't equal happiness."

Our Materialistic Society has fostered a distinct avenue of "Study" that has shown that Material Possessions do not provide happiness.

Most current Happiness Psychology books are, instead, focusing on Morals (R) and/or Relationships (A) as the new means to Happiness.

In the Happiness Deception we will see that there is no true happiness from any of the elements we have referenced, thus far.

A large part, and some would say the major part, of our "Happiness" comes from our Self-Concept and the way we see ourselves, our Self Esteem; for it is due to Self Esteem that we choose which of the "discrete actions or practices that people can choose to do".
Self Esteem is the Mirror of Pride.
It is how we see ourselves.
We all seek to have the highest Self-Esteem.

Theory

Carl Rogers recognized that people basically strive to be good (Mentally Healthy)-- or at the very least, not *really* bad (Mentally Ill).

In other words, he sees mental health as the normal progression of life, and he sees mental illness, criminality, and other human problems, as distortions of that natural tendency.

So, Rogers codified the Trend Towards Human Good and the Trend Towards Human Bad as a Psychological Construct so people could be "treated" to emphasize Human Goodness over Human Badness.

This HG vs. HB is the narrative of the Old Testament, beginning with Adam and Eve in the 3rd chapter of Genesis.

Rogers' entire theory is built on a single “force of life” he calls the “actualizing tendency”.

It can be defined as the built-in **motivation** present in every life-form to develop its potentials to the fullest extent possible.

Rogers was not just talking about survival: Rogers believed that all creatures strive to make the very best of their existence.

If they fail to do so, it is not for a lack of desire.

Rogers captures with this single great need or motive all the other motives that other theorists talk about.

He asks us, why do we want air and water and food?

Why do we seek safety, love, and a sense of competence?

Why, indeed, do we seek to discover new medicines, invent new power sources, or create new works of art?

Because, he answers, it is in our nature as living things to do the very best we can!

All of Planet Earth's creatures are motivated to function according to God's original plan:

We know that the whole creation [of irrational creatures] has been moaning together in the pains of labor until now. (Amplified Bible)

For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. (NLT)

It is plain to anyone with eyes to see that at the present time all created life groans in a sort of universal travail.

(Phillips)

All of God's Creation awaits the redemption of the Earth to God's control.

Rogers believes that the individual is "good", but that in creating society and culture, we created a "monster". When we created culture, it developed a life of its own. Rather than remaining close to other aspects of our natures, culture became a force in its own right. What the Scriptures call the Kosmos or Cosmos - the Evil World System that follows Satan as its leader. It is a system of Evil -- Anti-God -- relying on this inbuilt Motivation to do Good, to "be like God."

Genesis 3:1 *Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"* **2** *And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,* **3** *but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4* *But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5* *For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*

This is Roger's "Real You", the one who is "like God, knowing Good and Evil."

Don't Be Deceived!

...ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil. - Genesis 3:5

One of Satan's most effective tactics down through the ages has been deception. He is a master at making things appear what they are not. A mixture of truth and error seems to serve his purposes much better than total error.

Donald Grey Barnhouse illustrated this forcefully with the following story: "Duveen, the famous English art connoisseur, took his little daughter to the beach one day, but could not get her to go into the chilly water. After persuasion failed, he borrowed a teakettle, built a fire, and heated a little water until it steamed beautifully. With much flourish, he poured it into the ocean. Greatly impressed, his daughter went in without a murmur."

Barnhouse then made this application: Satan “dilutes an ocean of unbelief with a steaming teakettle of Christian ethics, and people go wading in, self-satisfied, but unaware that they are bathing in unbelief.”

The adversary is delighted when a person turns over a new leaf or engages in good works, just as long as he continues to reject the provision of God’s grace in salvation. Somehow the sinner completely ignores the fatal error or not trusting Christ because his life as been tempered with a teakettle of wholesome resolves.

Our Lord’s words are very clear: “...he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” ([John 3:18](#)). Don’t be deceived by Satan’s clever ploy. You cannot dilute an ocean of cold unbelief with a little warm water of religiosity or good human endeavor. P.R.V.

Don't misunderstand, Rogers would, in his rejection of God, have us believe that Culture and society are not intrinsically evil!

He has rejected the Truth of God's Word that we are intrinsically evil, so he must continue his rejection, by rejecting God's evaluation of the Cosmos as Evil.

He does believe, however, that our elaborate societies, complex cultures, incredible technologies, for all that they have helped us to survive and prosper, may at the same time serve to harm us, and possibly even destroy us.

And, of course, that "standards" from Society (particularly Biblical Standards), are promoting an "Ideal Self" that we cannot meet, so they are to be rejected.

Rogers tells us that organisms know what is good for them (*"you shall be like gods"*).

Among the many things that we instinctively value is positive regard, Rogers umbrella term for things like love, affection, attention, nurturance, and so on.

It is clear that babies need love and attention.

In fact, it may well be that they die without it.

They certainly fail to thrive -- i.e. become all they can be.

So, Rogers recognized Approbation as a Primary Motivator within us.

And, of course, he identified that we value positive self-regard, that is, self-esteem, self-worth, a positive self-image.

He believes that we achieve this positive self-regard by experiencing the positive regard others show us over our years of growing up, which is certainly a factor in self esteem at an early age to reinforce our feelings of self-regard.

Without this self-regard, children feel small and helpless, and fail to become all that they can be! He has made the common mistake of placing the emphasis on the external factors related to self-esteem, rather than on the internal factors -- our self-evaluation of our efficacy and worth -- giving the "power" of our "Mental Health" to what Society says and does.

Remember, Rogers thinks that the individual is "good" but Society "corrupts" that Good.

He believes that our society also leads us astray with conditions of worth:

As we grow up, our parents, teachers, peers, the media, and others, only give us what we need when we show we are "worthy," rather than just because we need it.

We get a drink when we finish our class, we get something sweet when we finish our vegetables, and most importantly, we get love and affection if and only if we "behave!"

Getting positive regard on some condition Rogers calls conditional positive regard.

Because we do indeed need positive regard, these conditions are very powerful, and we bend ourselves into a shape determined, not by our organismic valuing or our actualizing tendency, but by a society that may or may not truly have our best interests at heart.

The Scriptures partly agree: *"Be not conformed to this world..."*

But, the Scriptures for Christians are not about the battle between "Self Actualization" (being the best we can be") and the Societal Standard, but about *"be transformed by the renovation of your thinking."*

By *"being conformed to the image of Christ."*

Rogers' theory is all about the promotion of Human Good as the ultimate in life -- all about the supremacy of "you", the "real you", not the one that Society forces upon you, as we'll see next...

In Rogers theory, and it is at least partially true in this regard, over time, this “conditioning” leads us to adopt this conditional positive self-regard as well.

We begin to like ourselves only if we meet up with the standards others have applied to us, rather than if we are truly actualizing our potentials.

We have adopted "Approbation" as a primary Motivator in life.

And, according to Rogers, since these standards were created without keeping each individual in mind, more often than not we find ourselves unable to meet them, and therefore unable to maintain any sense of [positive] self-esteem.

In other words, Rogers rejects societal norms as a positive human invention, though we know that they are partly "God-ordained" for the survival of the species (the whole purpose of the 10 Commandments, etc.)

Societal rules help define Good and Bad, just as the 10 Commandments did for the Jews, and, Romans says, the "Law of God written on their hearts" of the Gentiles:

Romans 5:12 *Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—*

13 *for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.*

14 *Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.*

Rogers' Incongruity

The aspect of your being that is founded in the actualizing tendency, follows organismic valuing, needs and receives positive regard and self-regard, Rogers calls the **Real Self**.

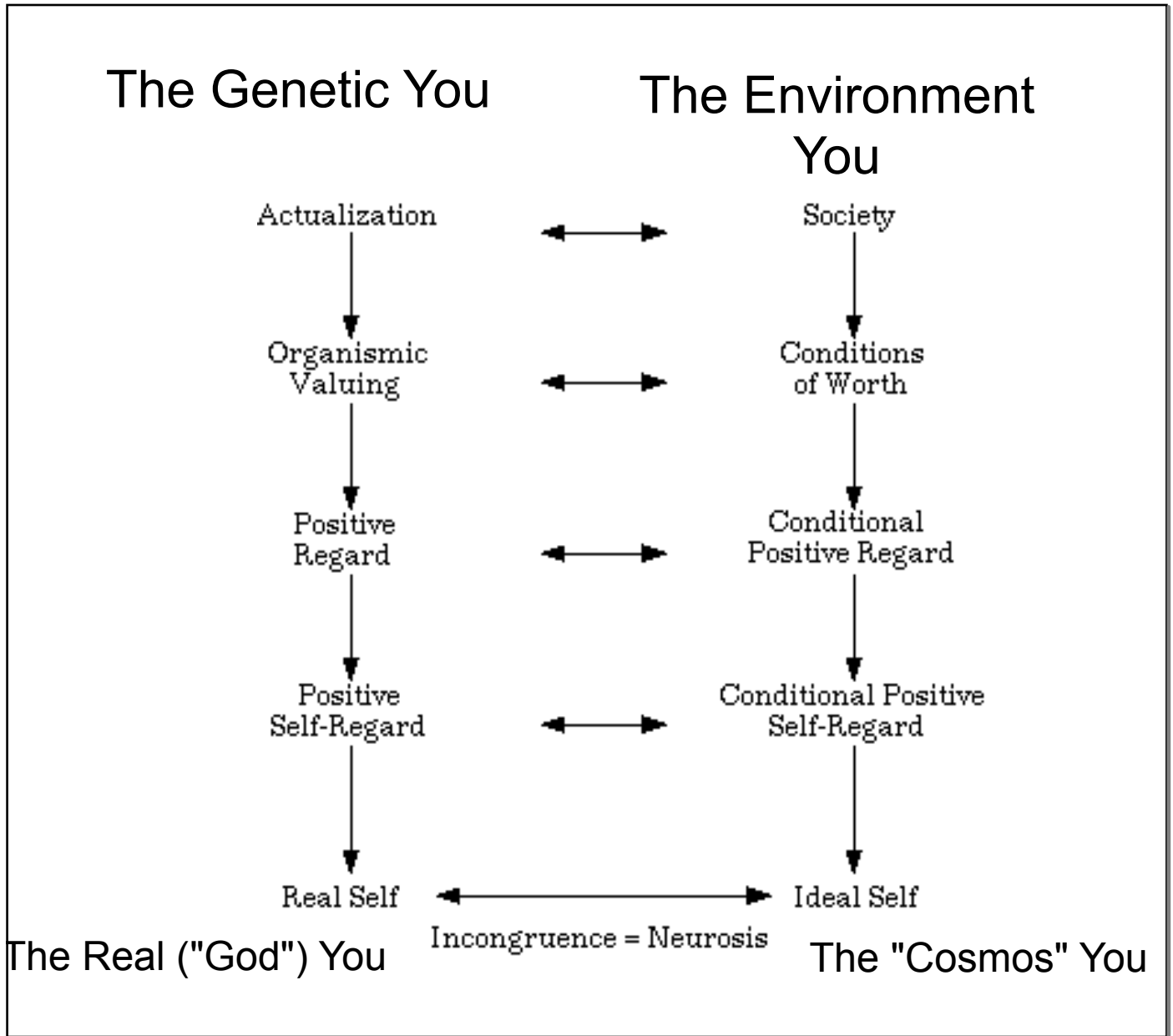
It is the “you” that, if all goes well, you will become.

On the other hand, to the extent that our society is out of synch with the actualizing tendency, and we are forced to live with conditions of worth that are out of step with organismic valuing, and receive only conditional positive regard and self-regard, we develop instead an **Ideal Self**.

By ideal, Rogers is suggesting something not real, something that is always out of our reach, the standard we can't meet.

The Scriptures agree, in that we have a negative side to our Human Nature that prevents us from "being good"

Rom 2:17 But if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast in God 18 and know his will and approve what is excellent, because you are instructed from the law; 19 and if you are sure that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of children, having in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth— 21 you then who teach others, do you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? 22 You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who boast in the law dishonor God by breaking the law. 24 For, as it is written, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.”



According to Rogers, this gap between the real self and the ideal self, the "I am" and the "I should" is called "Incongruity".

The greater the gap, the more incongruity.

The more incongruity, the more suffering.

In fact, incongruity is essentially what Rogers means by neurosis: Being out of synch with your own self.

We see it as a conflict between our Evil Genetic Nature and our Evil Environmental Nature -- both are Anti-God! Psychology, not just Rogers, but all of them, essentially consider the individual to be "God" and the influences around them to be the problem -- "it's your Parent's fault", for example.

The key to most Psychological systems is the shedding of Responsibility -- it's not your fault!

Or, at best, you are responsible for letting Society (Parents) do this to you.

Defenses

When you are in a situation where there is an incongruity between your image of yourself and your immediate experience of yourself (i.e. between the ideal and the real self), you are in a threatening situation. For example, if you have been taught to feel unworthy if you do not get A's on all your tests, and yet you aren't really all that great a student, then situations such as tests are going to bring that incongruity to light -- tests will be very threatening.

When you are expecting a threatening situation, you will feel anxiety.

Anxiety is a signal indicating that there is trouble ahead, that you should avoid the situation!

One way to avoid the situation, of course, is to pick yourself up and run for the hills.

Since that is not usually an option in life, instead of running physically, we run psychologically, by using defenses.

Rogers' idea of defenses is very similar to Freud's, except that Rogers considers everything from a perceptual point-of-view, so that even memories and impulses are thought of as perceptions.

Fortunately for us, he has only two defenses: denial and perceptual distortion.

Denial means very much what it does in Freud's system: You block out the threatening situation altogether.

An example might be the person who never picks up his test or asks about test results, so he doesn't have to face poor grades (at least for now!).

Denial for Rogers does also include what Freud called repression: If keeping a memory or an impulse out of your awareness -- refuse to perceive it -- you may be able to avoid (again, for now!) a threatening situation.

Perceptual distortion is a matter of reinterpreting the situation so that it appears less threatening.

It is very similar to Freud's rationalization.

A student that is threatened by tests and grades may, for example, blame the professor for poor teaching, trick questions, bad attitude, or whatever.

The fact that sometimes professors are poor teachers, write trick questions, and have bad attitudes only makes the distortion work better: If it could be true, then maybe it really was true!

It can also be much more obviously perceptual, such as when the person misreads his grade as better than it is.

Unfortunately for the poor neurotic (and, in fact, most of us), every time he or she uses a defense, they put a greater distance between the real and the ideal. They become ever more incongruous, and find themselves in more and more threatening situations, develop greater and greater levels of anxiety, and use more and more defenses.... It becomes a vicious cycle that the person eventually is unable to get out of, at least on their own.

Let's look at these "Defenses" from a Doctrinal perspective:

Denial means very much what it does in Freud's system: You block out the threatening situation altogether.

We have defined this as a form of "Self Deception."

Perceptual distortion is a matter of reinterpreting the situation so that it appears less threatening.

We know this as "Self Justification."

Both of them are a form of _____.

Rogers also has a partial explanation for psychosis: Psychosis occurs when a person's defenses are overwhelmed, and their sense of self becomes "shattered" into little disconnected pieces. His behavior likewise has little consistency to it. We see him as having "psychotic breaks" -- episodes of bizarre behavior. His words may make little sense. His emotions may be inappropriate. He may lose the ability to differentiate self and non-self, and become disoriented and passive.

We know this as the end stage of Self Absorption -- the person has no regard for anything but himself and he regards everything by how it affects him, alone.

Psychosis: An extension of the Incongruence

Incongruence = Neurosis



Threatening Situations



Anxiety



Defenses



Increased Incongruence



Shattered Self (Psychosis)

Jay Bybee's ... self-absorption -- Salon

Jay Bybee was a Lawyer involved in the approval of the Interrogation Techniques (Torture) used by the CIA. [Bybee] said he was "proud of our opinions" at the Office of Legal Counsel, too, calling them "well researched" and "very carefully written."

Still, he said the controversy surrounding his tenure there had been difficult.

"I have regrets because of the notoriety that this has brought me," he said. **"It has imposed enormous pressures on me both professionally and personally.** It has had an impact on my family. And I regret that, as a result of my government service, that that kind of attention has been visited on me and on my family."

The self-pity exhibited by Bybee here is not uncommon.

As his company ravaged the Gulf, BP CEO Tony Hayward's complaint that "I'd like my life back" demonstrated who he thought was the real victim of the oil spill -- himself.

Bush era CIA Chief and Iraq War enabler George Tenet lamented "the toll that the Iraq War had taken," by which he meant not the hundreds of thousands of innocent dead people or the multiple tours of duty for American soldiers, but rather the teasing which his children received at school for having a father who helped unleash that war.

And Alberto Gonzales -- in the wake of his scandal-caused forced resignation -- wasted no time publicly complaining about his inability to find a high-paying job.

However, Self Absorption is not always so obvious, as revealed in this article by [LAURA L. SMITH, PH.D.](#) People with social anxiety (technically called social phobia) fear public speaking, being assertive, going to parties, meeting new people, speaking up to authority figures (like a teacher or boss), eating in public, or similar situations in which they believe that others may evaluate or scrutinize them. Anxiety in those with social phobia usually includes physical symptoms such as sweating, rapid heart rate, upset stomach, flushed face, and shakiness. The prominent emotions are fear and dread. The difference between shyness and social phobia is one of degree—those with social anxiety have a very very bad case of shyness that leads to severe limitations in life.

For example, a man who fears public speaking might believe that his voice will give out, he'll forget his lines, he'll not be able to answer questions, people will laugh at him, or he will be so frightened that he'll lose control and run off stage. A woman with concerns about meeting other people may be afraid that when she speaks her voice will shake, that others will reject her, or that she might embarrass herself by saying something inappropriate. People with social phobia believe that they will certainly be humiliated, embarrassed, or shown to be inadequate.

It's no wonder that those with social anxiety tend to withdraw from others. And the more they withdraw, the more anxiety wins control.

Social phobia can be successfully treated with cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Elsewhere in this blog we have written about exposure which is the "B" in CBT. Exposure involves coming face to face with fear, usually done in a planned, systematic way.

The cognitive part of treatment involves looking at the way thoughts influence feelings, helping clients identify unhelpful thoughts, and replacing them with more adaptive thoughts.

Self-absorption is a common theme of the thoughts of those with social anxiety.

Self-absorption involves paying excessive attention to oneself. It's like a video camera is constantly turned on to you and the picture it transmits is too bright and quite unflattering. Common thoughts related to this theme include:

- Everyone is staring at me.
- My voice is shaking and people are all thinking that I'm scared to death.
- I'm making a complete fool out of myself.
- I look ugly.
- People will think I'm stupid.
- I never know the right thing to say.

So how does one address the self-absorption underlying such socially anxious thinking? First, try experimenting with “putting your ego on the shelf.” Realize that the rest of the world does not focus on you nearly as much as you think. Typically, people walk around more focused on their own concerns than on judging you or others. Second, start noticing how often you see other people engaging in the very actions you worry so much about. For example, listen to two people talking at a gathering. Inevitably, you’ll hear a few unintelligible phrases, social gaffes, boring, or grammatically incorrect statements. So what? Do you evaluate others as harshly as you do yourself?

Probably not. In addition, you might consider these coping phrases when you are in a difficult or embarrassing situation:

- Everything isn't all about me.
- So what if a few people have negative thoughts about me.
- Mistakes just make people human.
- No one is going to remember what I did a week from now.
- What matters is where my heart is, not how I perform.

An Analysis of Carl Rogers' Theory of Personality by Dagmar Pescitelli

Rogers approach to the study of persons is phenomenological and idiographic. His view of human behavior is that it is "exquisitely rational" (Rogers, 1961, p.194).

Furthermore, in his opinion: "the core of man's nature is essentially positive" (1961, p.73), and he is a "trustworthy organism" (1977, p.7).

These beliefs are reflected in his theory of personality. This, of course is totally refuted by the Scriptures:

Romans 3:10 as it is written:

“None is righteous, no, not one;

11 no one understands;

no one seeks for God.

12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.”

*13 “Their throat is an open grave;
they use their tongues to deceive.”*

“The venom of asps is under their lips.”

14 *“Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.”*

15 *“Their feet are swift to shed blood;*

16 *in their paths are ruin and misery,*

17 *and the way of peace they have not known.”*

18 *“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”*

19 *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.*

20 *For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

Self

The human organism's "phenomenal field" includes all experiences available at a given moment, both conscious and unconscious (Rogers, 1959).

As development occurs, a portion of this field becomes differentiated and this becomes the person's "self" (Hall & Lindzey, 1985; Rogers, 1959).

The "self" is a central construct in this theory.

It develops through interactions with others and involves awareness of being and functioning.

The self-concept is "the organized set of characteristics that the individual perceives as peculiar to himself/herself" (Ryckman, 1993, p.106).

It is based largely on the social evaluations he/she has experienced.

The "self" is described as:
the organized, consistent, conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the "I" or "me" and the perceptions of the relationships of the "I" or "me" to others and to various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions. (Rogers, 1959, p.200)

THE TRUE MEANING OF SELF-ESTEEM

by Robert Reasoner

Educators, parents, business and government leaders agree that we need to develop individuals with healthy or high self-esteem characterized by tolerance and respect for others, individuals who accept responsibility for their actions, have integrity, take pride in their accomplishments, who are self-motivated, willing to take risks, capable of handling criticism, loving and lovable, seek the challenge and stimulation of worthwhile and demanding goals, and take command and control of their lives.

"Human Good kinda People!"

Unfortunately, efforts to convey the significance and critical nature of self-esteem have been hampered by misconceptions and confusion over what is meant by the term “self-esteem.”

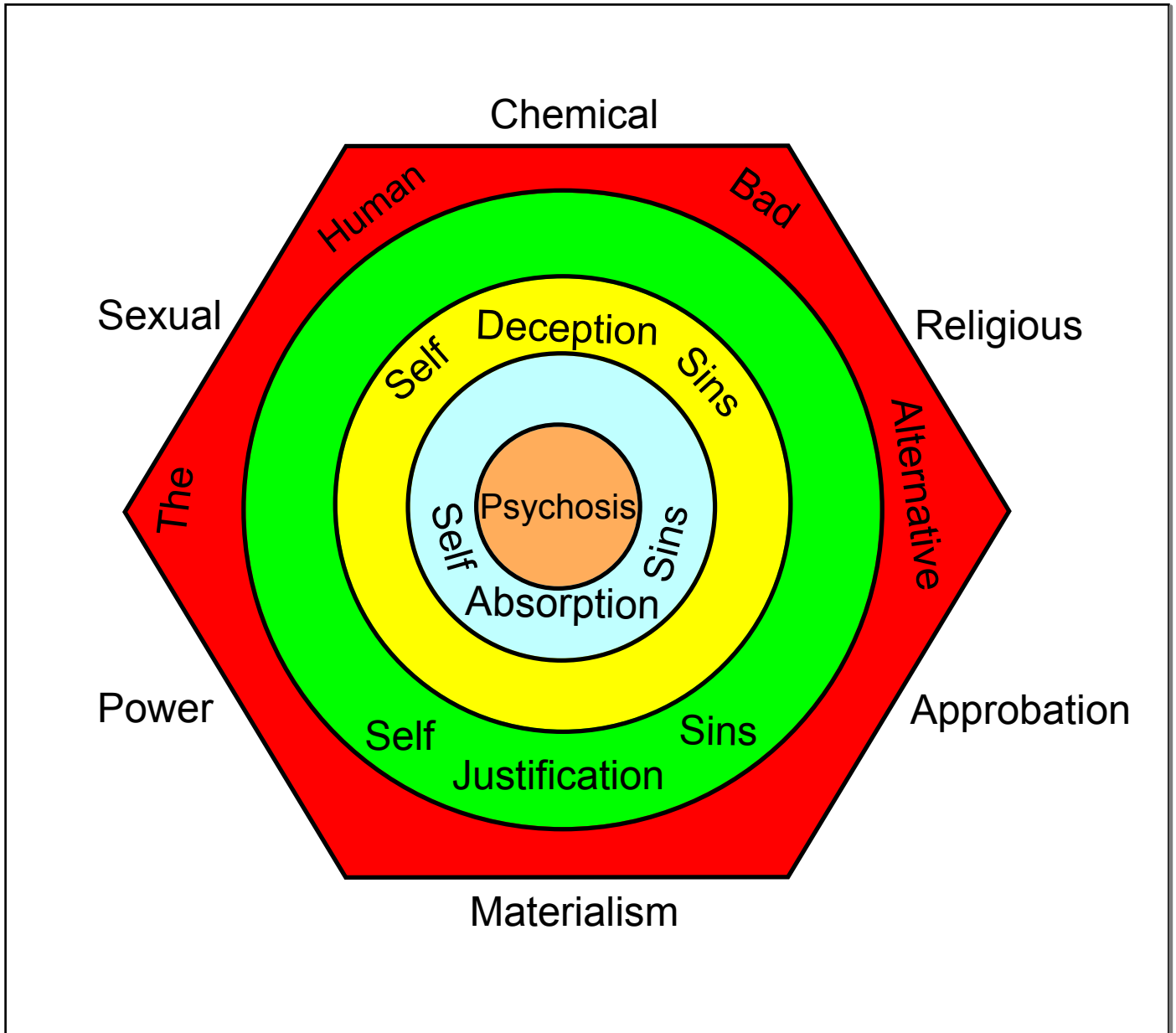
Some have referred to self-esteem as merely “feeling good” or having positive feelings about oneself.

Others have gone so far as to equate self-esteem with egotism, arrogance, conceit, narcissism, a sense of superiority, a trait leading to violence.

Such characteristics cannot be attributed to authentic, healthy self-esteem, because they are actually defensive reactions to the lack of authentic self-esteem, which is sometimes referred to as “pseudo self-esteem.”

Human Good Self-Esteem vs. Human Bad Self-Esteem

1. Individuals with defensive or **low self-esteem** typically focus on trying to prove themselves or impress others.
2. They tend to use others for their own gain.
3. Some act with arrogance and contempt towards others.
4. They generally lack confidence in themselves, often have doubts about their worth and acceptability, and hence are reluctant to take risks or expose themselves to failure.
5. They frequently blame others for their shortcomings rather than take responsibility for their actions.



1. "Individuals with defensive or **low self-esteem** typically focus on trying to prove themselves or impress others."

Why?

To raise their Self Esteem in an alternative way -- ANY way the can -- in this case with Approbation .

2. "They tend to use others for their own gain."

Why?

Accomplishment can come by self effort, or, if necessary, by accomplishing a manipulation of someone else to accomplish it for them. (Power Adaptation)

3. "Some act with arrogance and contempt towards others."

Why?

If one cannot feel Self-Esteem by Accomplishment in one of the HAM's, then building Self-Esteem by XXXX into one of the other HAM's in which they can accomplish a "victory", and Power is a common Alternative.

4. "They generally lack confidence in themselves, often have doubts about their worth and acceptability, and hence are reluctant to take risks or expose themselves to failure."

Why?

They have a lack of confidence because they have a lack of skill in the HAM challenge they are facing. A person who cannot or will not resort to a Power Strategy will withdraw to avoid the situation, and will often search for a Chemical HAM Strategy, or an Approbation HAM Strategy of Pity or Empathy Seeking.

5. "They frequently blame others for their shortcomings rather than take responsibility for their actions."

Why?

Avoiding responsibility is a Denial, a Self Deception strategy to avoid failure and suffering a blow to their Self-Esteem.

A close relationship has been documented between low self-esteem and such problems as

1. Violence
2. Alcoholism and drug abuse
3. Eating disorders
4. Low academic achievement and School dropouts
5. Teenage pregnancy
6. Suicide

1. Violence: Violence, as we have seen is a Power Strategy alternative to facing their lack of Problem Solving Skills in the Power HAM situation at hand, or they may substitute the Power Ham for one in which they have inadequate Problem Solving Skills.

2. Alcoholism and drug abuse: These are obvious Human Bad Responses to a lack of Problem Solving Skills in the Chemical HAM situation at hand.

3. Eating disorders: This one is sometimes a Power issue -- "I may not be able to Problem Solve the Power Situation I am confronted with, but I can control my eating." Sometimes it is a Chemical HAM Issue.

4. Low academic achievement and School dropouts

5. Teenage pregnancy

6. Suicide

Nathaniel Branden, Ph.D., a well known psychotherapist, defined self-esteem several years ago as “The disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness.”

The National Association for Self-Esteem modified this to define self-esteem as "The experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness."

Christopher Mruk, Ph.D., a psychology professor at Bowling Green University, reports in his book *Self-Esteem: Research, Theory, and Practice* that of all the theories and definitions proposed, this description of self-esteem has best withstood the test of time in terms of accuracy and comprehensiveness.

This concept of self-esteem is founded on the premise that it is strongly connected to a sense of competence and worthiness and the relationship between the two as one lives life.

The **worthiness component** of self-esteem is often misunderstood as simply feeling good about oneself, when it actually is tied to whether or not a person lives up to certain fundamental human values, such as finding meanings that foster human growth and making commitments to them in a way that leads to a sense of integrity and satisfaction.

A sense of **competence** is having the conviction that one is generally capable of producing desired results, having confidence in the efficacy of our mind and our ability to think, as well as to make appropriate choices and decisions.

Self-esteem stems from the experience of living consciously and might be viewed as a person's overall judgment of himself or herself pertaining to self-competence and self-worth based on reality.

"The experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness."

The value of this definition is that it is useful in making the distinction between authentic or healthy self-esteem and pseudo or unhealthy self-esteem.

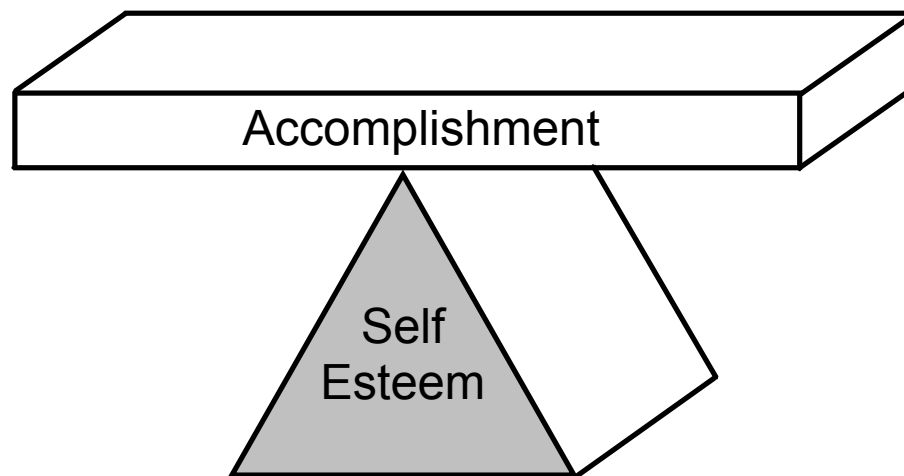
A sense of personal worth without competence is just as limiting as competence without worthiness.

A strong sense of worthiness prevents competence from becoming arrogance by keeping the individual focused on basic values, and competence prevents worthiness from becoming narcissism by requiring good feelings to be earned, not given.

Thus, behaviors that might be described as egotistic, egocentric, conceited, boasting or bragging, bullying, taking advantage of, or harming others are defensive behaviors indicative of a lack of self-esteem.

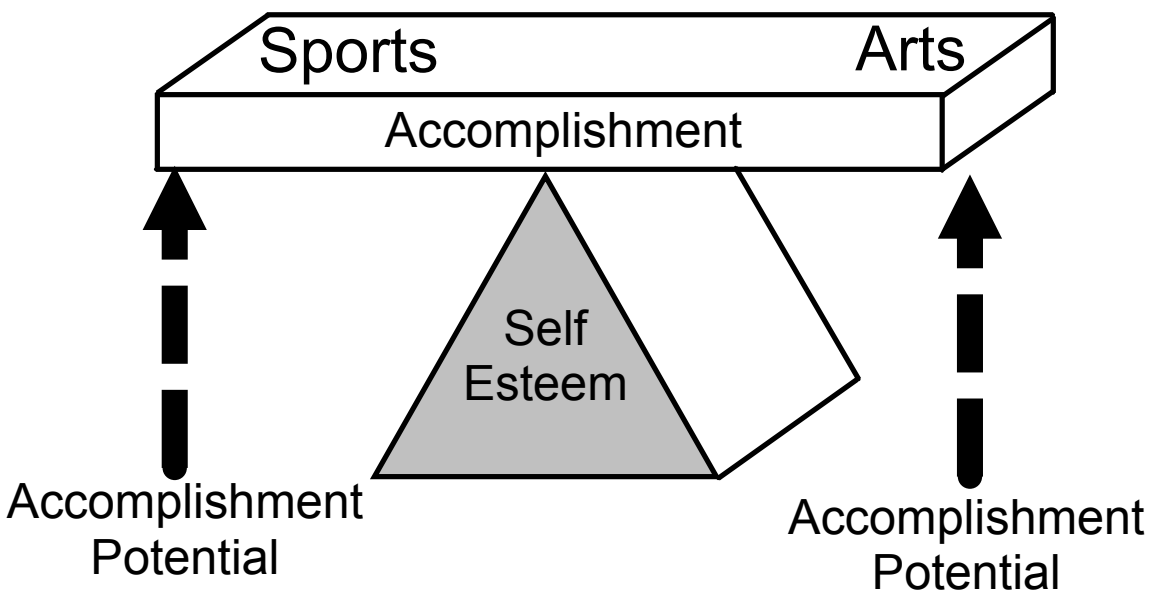
Such behaviors, therefore, should not be confused with authentic, healthy self-esteem.

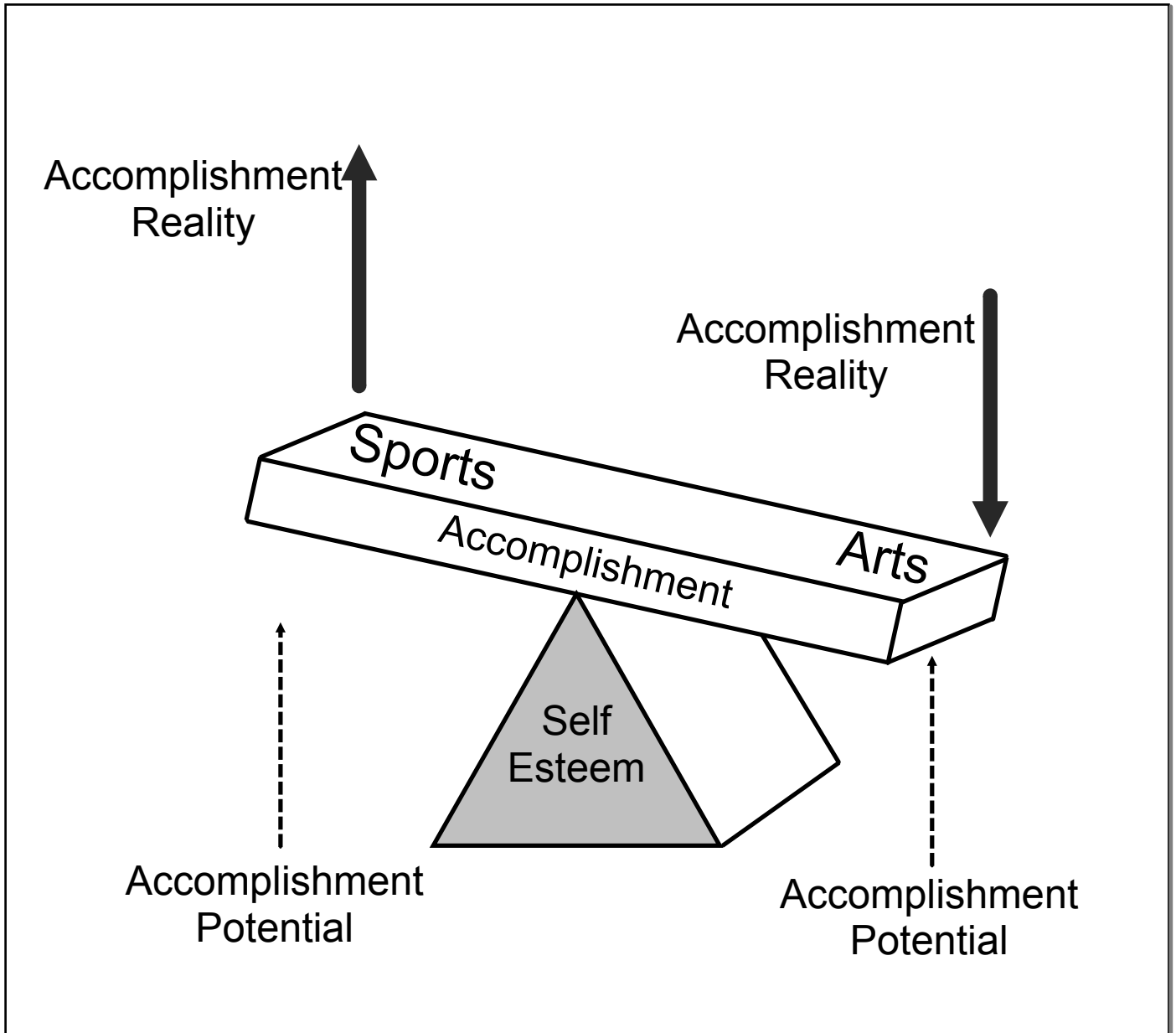
Self-Esteem comes from Accomplishment

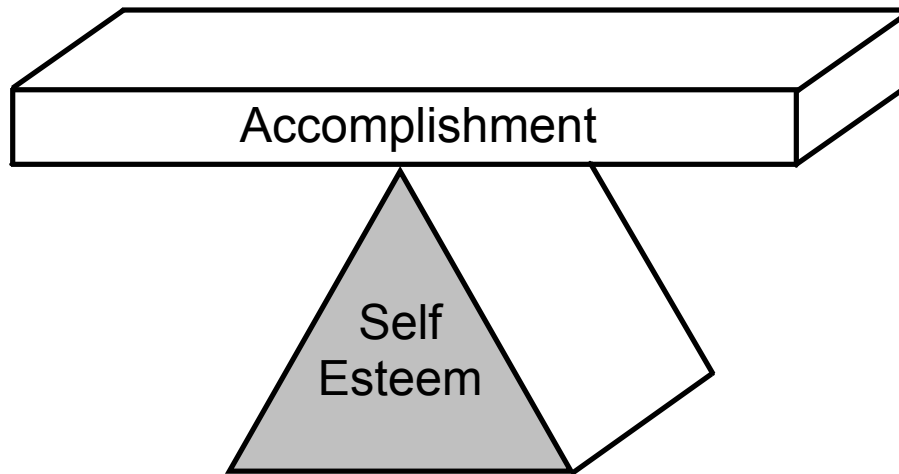


"The experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness."

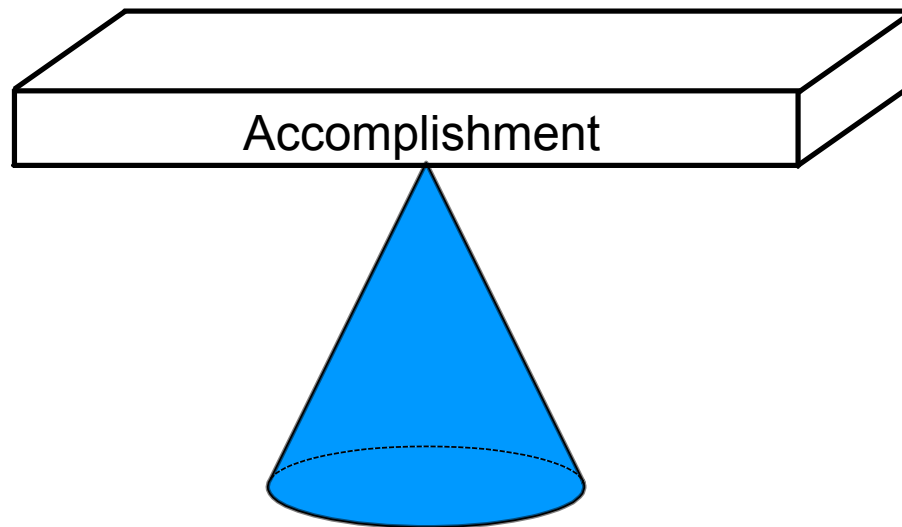
A Common Example in Our Culture Today

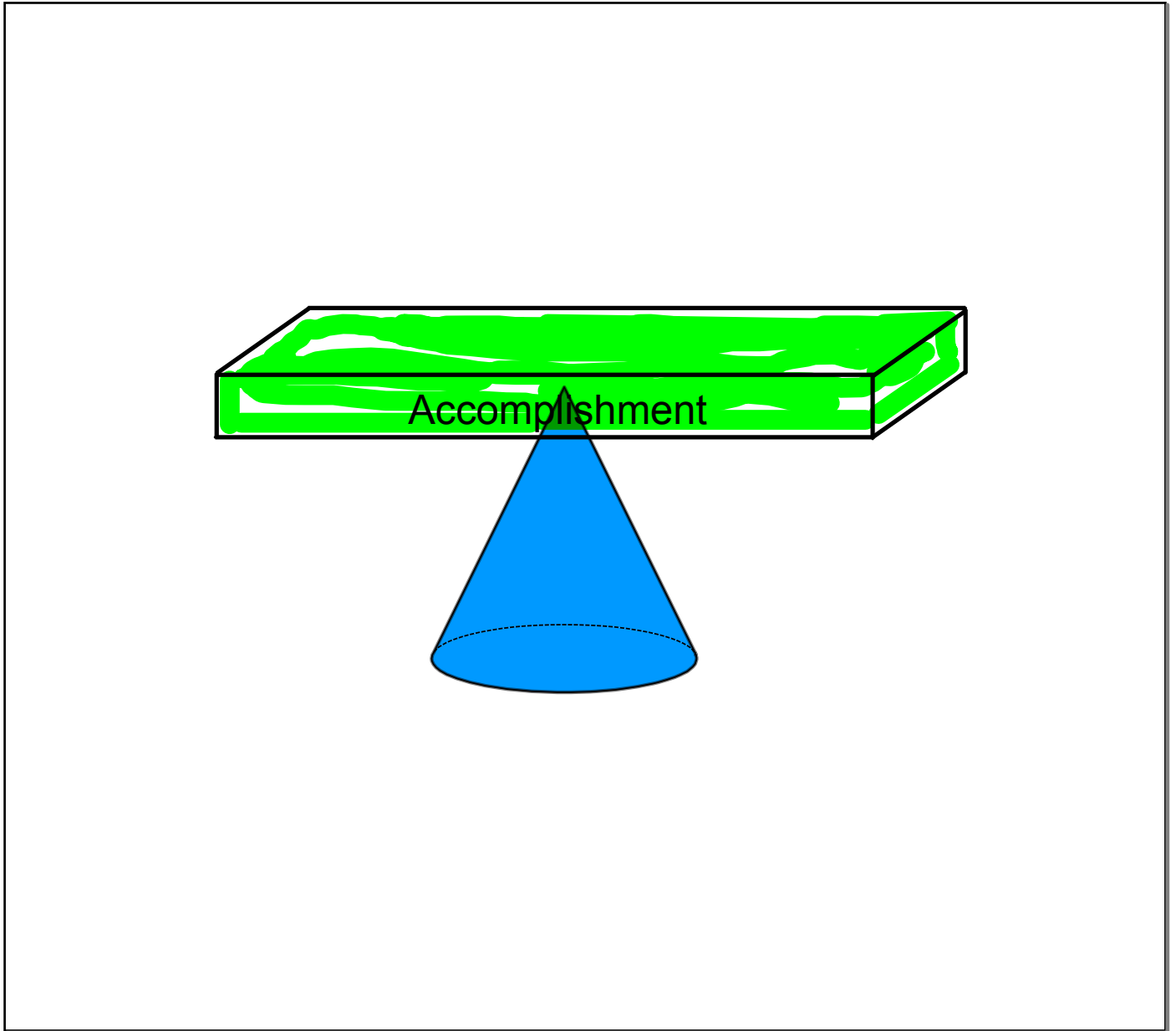


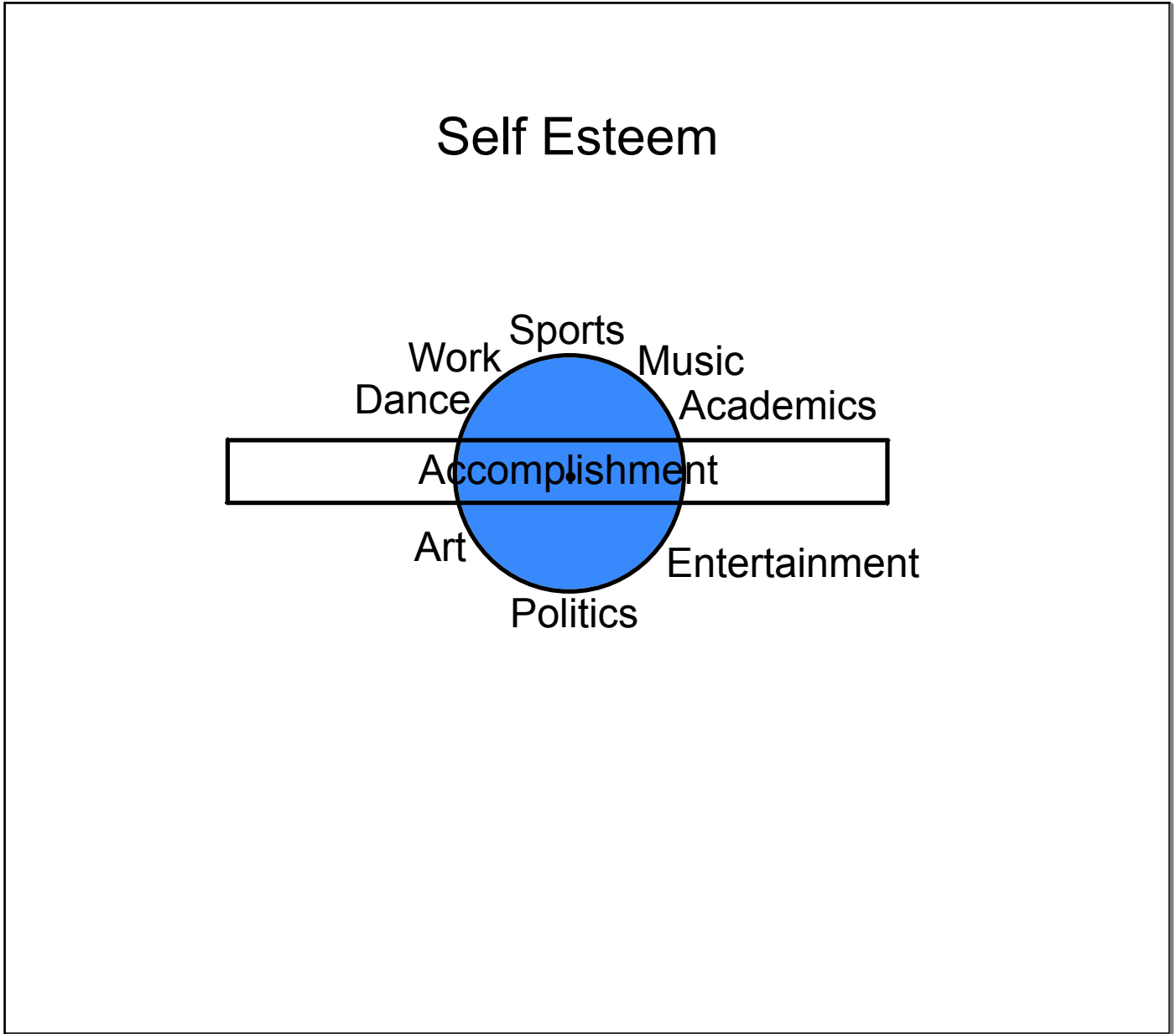


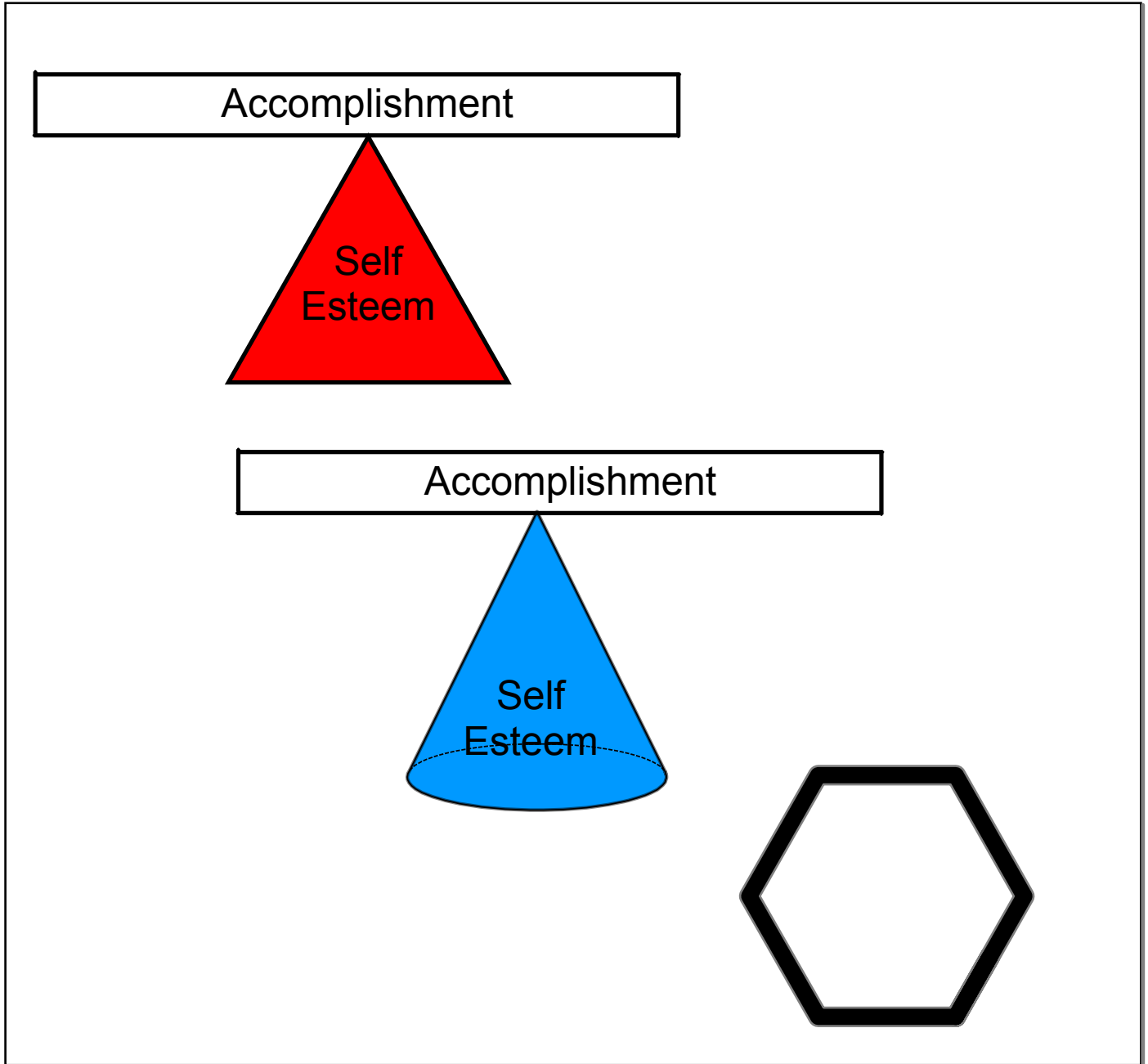


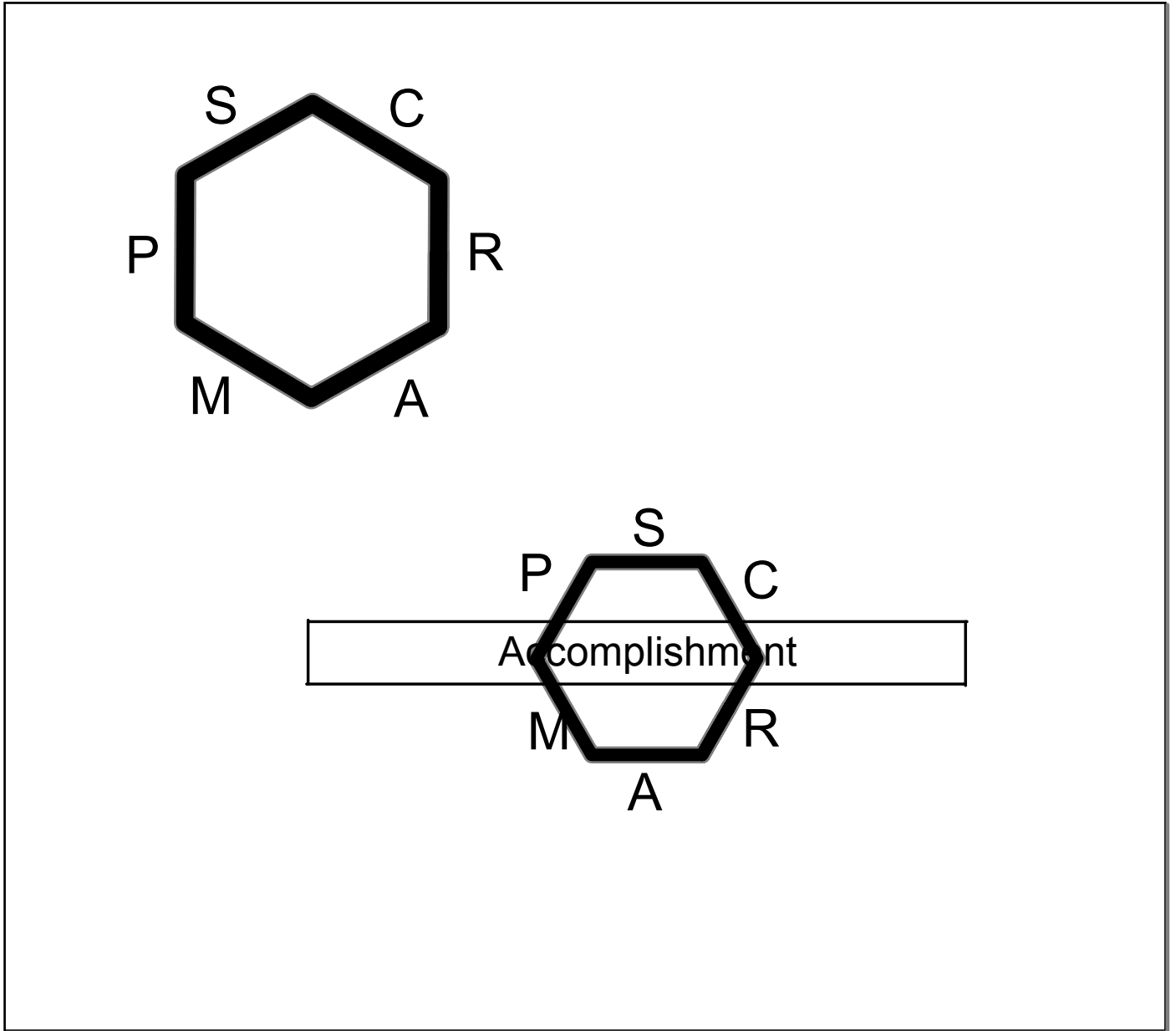
This triangular based model only applies when choosing between TWO choices for Self-Esteem, but life is full of choices, so a better illustration is to change the base to one that can "tilt" in many directions -- perhaps a Cone.

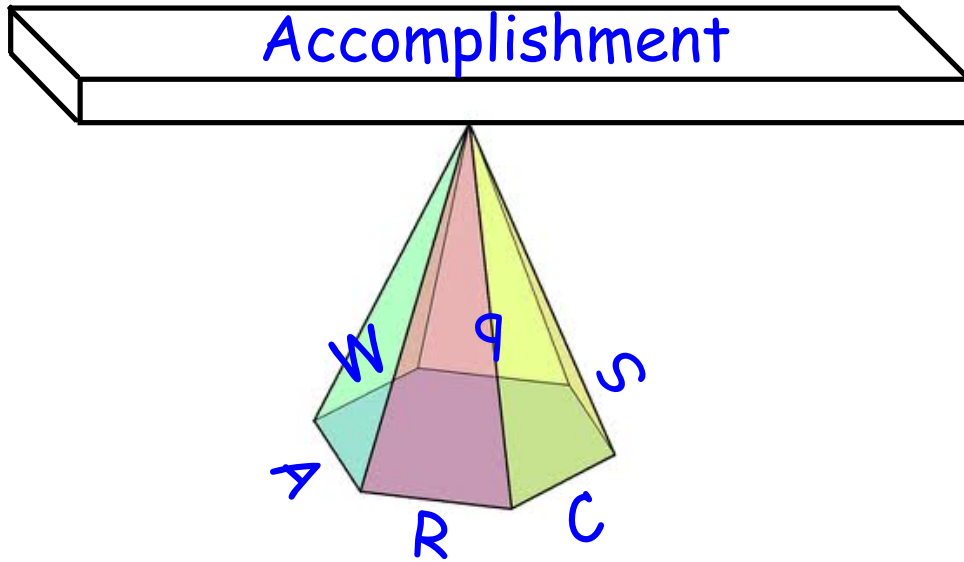












The Romans 7 Human Good/Human Bad Teeter-Totter

7 What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

8 But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.

9 I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

10 The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.

11 For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

13 Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.

15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

16 Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.

17 So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

18 For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

19 For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

20 Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

21 So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

22 For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,
23 but I see in my members another law waging war
against the law of my mind and making me captive to
the law of sin that dwells in my members.

24 Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from
this body of death?

25 Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So
then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind*, but
with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Self-Esteem comes from
accomplishment

If the person cannot accomplish Human Good responses to life's situations, he will develop his Self-Esteem through the Bad Behavior of Human Bad (Sin). This is often spoken of in Psychology as "Low Self Esteem, when, in reality, it is High Self Esteem in the "wrong" area.

Bad Behavior, Human Bad
(Sin) is the Compensation for
the inability to respond with
Human Good.
It begins as Ignorance, it
progresses to a Lifestyle.

