

IF I WERE ME - Teacher's Guide

What makes you, you? Psychologists usually talk about our traits, or defined characteristics that make us who we are. But there are moments when we transcend those traits — sometimes because our culture demands it of us, and sometimes because we demand it of ourselves. But something that we should be clear about is that your personality may be more malleable than you think.

Research suggests that both biological and environmental influences play a role in shaping our personalities. Other studies suggest that both nature and nurture play a role in the development of each of the five personality factors. Evidence of this theory has been growing for many years, beginning with the research of D. W. Fiske (1949) and later expanded upon by other researchers including Norman (1967), Smith (1967), Goldberg (1981), and McCrae & Costa (1987).

Activity 1

What Are the Big Five Dimensions of Personality?

<https://www.verywellmind.com/the-big-five-personality-dimensions-2795422>

It is important to note that each of the five personality factors represents a range between two extremes. In the real world, most people lie somewhere in between the two polar ends of each dimension.

These five categories are usually described as follows.

Openness

This trait features characteristics such as imagination and insight. People who are high in this trait also tend to have a broad range of interests. They are curious about the world and other people and eager to learn new things and enjoy new experiences.

People who are high in this trait tend to be more adventurous and creative. People low in this trait are often much more traditional and may struggle with abstract thinking.

High

- Very creative
- Open to trying new things
- Focused on tackling new challenges
- Happy to think about abstract concepts

Low

- Dislikes change
- Does not enjoy new things
- Resists new ideas
- Not very imaginative
- Dislikes abstract or theoretical concepts

Conscientiousness

Standard features of this dimension include high levels of thoughtfulness, good impulse control, and goal-directed behaviours. Highly conscientious people tend to be organized and mindful of details. They plan ahead, think about how their behavior affects others, and are mindful of deadlines.

High

- Spends time preparing
- Finishes important tasks right away
- Pays attention to detail
- Enjoys having a set schedule

Low

- Dislikes structure and schedules
- Makes messes and doesn't take care of things
- Fails to return things or put them back where they belong
- Procrastinates: delays or puts off important tasks until the last minute, or past their deadline
- Fails to complete necessary or assigned tasks

Neuroticism

Neuroticism is a trait characterized by sadness, moodiness, and emotional instability.¹ Individuals who are high in this trait tend to experience mood swings, anxiety, irritability, and sadness. Those low in this trait tend to be more stable and emotionally resilient.

High

- Experiences a lot of stress
- Worries about many different things
- Gets upset easily
- Experiences dramatic shifts in mood
- Feels anxious
- Struggles to bounce back after stressful events

Low

- Emotionally stable
- Deals well with stress
- Rarely feels sad or depressed
- Doesn't worry much
- Is very relaxed

Extraversion

Extraversion (or extroversion) is characterized by excitability, sociability, talkativeness, assertiveness, and high amounts of emotional expressiveness.¹ People who are high in extraversion are outgoing and tend to gain energy in social situations. Being around other people helps them feel energized and excited.

People who are low in extraversion (or introverted) tend to be more reserved and have less energy to expend in social settings. Social events can feel draining and introverts often require a period of solitude and quiet in order to "recharge."

High

- Enjoys being the centre of attention
- Likes to start conversations
- Enjoys meeting new people
- Has a wide social circle of friends and acquaintances
- Finds it easy to make new friends
- Feels energized when around other people
- Says things before thinking about them

Low

- Prefers solitude
- Feels exhausted when having to socialize a lot
- Finds it difficult to start conversations
- Dislikes making small talk
- Carefully thinks things through before speaking
- Dislikes being the centre of attention

Agreeableness

This personality dimension includes attributes such as trust, altruism, kindness, affection, and other prosocial behaviors.¹ People who are high in agreeableness tend to be more cooperative while those low in this trait tend to be more competitive and sometimes even manipulative.

High

- Has a great deal of interest in other people
- Cares about others
- Feels empathy and concern for other people
- Enjoys helping and contributing to the happiness of other people
- Assists others who are in need of help

Low

- Takes little interest in others
- Doesn't care about how other people feel
- Has little interest in other people's problems
- Insults and belittles others
- Manipulates others to get what they want

Conclusion: These dimensions represent broad areas of personality. Research has demonstrated that these groupings of characteristics tend to occur together in many people. For example, individuals who are sociable tend to be talkative. However, these traits do not always occur together. Personality is complex and varied and each person may display behaviours across several of these dimensions.

➤ Get students in groups of five and give them one personality card to each of them (print and cut them). Ask them to pass them on so that they can read the five of them. They should identify themselves with one of the types of personality. Then they will discuss in the group if they agree with these categories and if the students know each other well enough, they could decide if the personality traits in their partners' chosen cards are how they would describe the others.

Activity 2

Me and people around me

This is mainly an individual self-reflection for students to realise what other people get from their interactions and also how much they know about themselves. There is some sharing in the class as long as the students wish to.

Activity 3

Befriending yourself

This activity refers to the importance of self-talk and positive self-awareness.

Activity 4

Song

Activities related to the song: "*Love Me for Me*" by MASN.

Activity 5

Me: Person

This activity poses questions to students who will work in small groups so that they all get an opportunity to express themselves. You can use the worksheets separately giving the different groups one of them. Then, a member of the group can go to another group who has been working with the different worksheet and tell them about their conclusions

Activity 6

How much do you know about me?

This is an interview for students to carry out for their family or closer friends to find out how much they know about them. afterwards they will analyse the results and write about them. They will share them in the class. Then, a debate can be held about how important it is to pay attention to what the people around us care for.