

Getting to Know Yourself

The following exercises are meant to stir your thinking with regard to who you are and who you are not. They assume that God has made you unique, given you particular strengths and gifts that display his beauty; but that no one is strong or gifted in all areas. Unfortunately, we often try to cover up our weaknesses and shame with a “false self,” and in doing so lose sight of our true self. These exercises will help you think through what you know of yourself to try to separate those things that are truly you (and therefore to be embraced) from the things that you have taken on that are not really in keeping with the way God made you (and therefore to be rejected).

There are six sections which approach these questions from different angles and perspectives. Pay attention to the things that first come to mind—sometimes we self-censor or ignore our gut reactions when they (or the Holy Spirit) could be trying to tell us something. Don’t rush through, either. Ask God for wisdom and insight—after all, he knows you better than you know yourself! Take one section at a time, allowing each to build into the final resolution to change.

First Impressions

Finish these statements with as many words as you can think of:

I am very...

I am not very...

I’m glad I’m not...

I wish I was...

What are the 5 attributes a close friend or family member would use to describe me?

What is true about me (good or bad) that most people would never know?

Getting Analytical

If you have ever taken personality tests, review their findings and summarize what each of them have to say about your strengths and weaknesses below. If you haven't taken any in the past, try the links below.

Myers-Briggs (MBTI) - <https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>

Enneagram - <https://www.9types.com/rheti/index.php> (free)
<https://tests.enneagraminstitute.com> (paid)

Strengthsfinder - <https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/253850/cliftonstrengths-for-individuals.aspx> (paid)

DISC - <https://www.discprofile.com> (paid)

Spiritual Gifts Inventories - <https://gifts.churchgrowth.org/spiritual-gifts-survey/>

Other Personality Tests –

What do these assessments say about who I am and how I am designed? What questions remain unanswered?

Going Back to Your Childhood

Often you can get a clearer picture of your true self by thinking back to your childhood. Young children are often the most free to simply be who they are, and it is only as we grow that we take on the expectations of others. Spend some time getting to know yourself as a child. Maybe you will want to discuss this with a parent or someone who knew you at the time, or looking at old pictures to bring back memories.

What was I like as a child?

What was I naturally good at?

What were my interests?

What made me feel uncomfortable?

When I had free time, how did I choose (or want) to spend it?

What did I want to be when I grew up, and why?

Growing Up

What activities and subjects was I drawn to in high school and in my twenties? What hobbies have I had over the years?

When I look back, what are my regrets? What things do I wish I had done/pursued (or hadn't)?

Are there any personality traits or ways of being that I may have adopted out of peer pressure or a desire to fit in? Why?

When have I have felt most alive and true to myself over the years?

When have I felt like I was faking it or not being true to myself?

Bringing it Together

In light of everything I've reflected on so far, what would it look like for me to really live into my own uniqueness?

What could I pay more attention to? What could result?

What could I pay less attention to? What could result?

What could I add into my schedule?

What would be helpful to give up?

How does my uniqueness sometimes cause me problems?

How does my uniqueness reveal God's image/beauty?

Resolving to Change

In gratitude to God for the grace he has given to me, I resolve to embrace and fully live into my uniqueness and beauty. In order to do this and truly be myself, I will try to:

(Finish this sentence in as many ways as you can, e.g. be less ____, be more ____, stop ____, start ____, let go of ____, etc.)