

Ten Key Capacities of the Real Self

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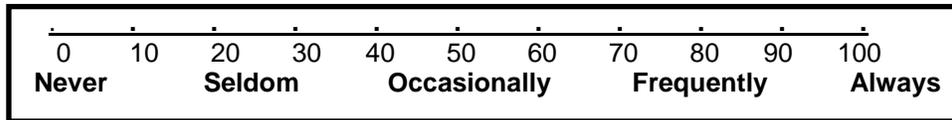
1. **Capacity to experience a wide range of feelings deeply** with liveliness, joy, vigor, excitement and spontaneity.
2. **Capacity to expect appropriate entitlements.** From early experiences of mastery, coupled with parental acknowledgment and support of the real self, healthy individuals build a sense of entitlement to appropriate experiences of mastery and pleasure, as well as the environmental input needed to achieve these objectives.
3. **Capacity for self-activation and assertion.** This capacity includes the ability to identify one's own unique individuality, wishes, dreams, and goals and to be assertive in expressing them autonomously.
4. **Acknowledgment of self-esteem.** This capacity allows a person to identify and acknowledge that he has effectively coped with a problem or crisis in a positive and creative way.
5. **The ability to soothe painful feelings.** The real self will not allow us to wallow in misery. When things go wrong and we are hurt, the real self devises means to minimize and soothe painful feelings.
6. **The ability to make and stick to commitments.** The real self allows us to make commitments to relationships and career goals. Despite obstacles and setbacks, a person with a strong sense of real self will not abandon her goal or decision when it is clear that it is a good one and in her best interest.
7. **Creativity.** Based on helping people allow their real selves to emerge, is the ability to replace old familiar patterns of living and problem-solving with new and equally or more successful ones.
8. **Intimacy.** The capacity to express the real self fully in a close relationship with another person with minimal anxiety about abandonment or engulfment [ability to self-soothe this anxiety].
9. **The ability to be alone.** The real self allows us to be alone without feeling abandoned. It enables us to manage ourselves and our feelings on our own through periods when there is no special person in our lives and not confuse this type of aloneness with the psychic aloneness, springing from an impaired real self, that drives us to despair or the pathological need to fill up our lives with meaningless sexual activity or dead-end relationships just to avoid coming face to face with the impaired real self.
10. **Continuity of self.** This is the capacity to recognize and acknowledge that we each have a core that persists through space and time.

Masterson, J.F. (1988). The search for the real self: Unmasking the personality disorders of our age. New York: Free Press.

DIFFSU

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Directions: Identify a number between 0 - 100 from the scale below that best represents your experience the listed items.



- _____ 1. I remain calm when people I care about are upset with me.
- _____ 2. It is more important for me to be satisfied with myself than to gain the approval of others.
- _____ 3. My words and my behaviors match each other.
- _____ 4. I can hold my point of view when someone I care about wants me to adopt their point of view.
- _____ 5. In decision -making, I can still think and reason while my feelings are intense.
- _____ 6. I can share my deepest thoughts and feelings without expectation that my partner share his/hers.
- _____ 7. I welcome difficulty when I know I will grow from the experience.
- _____ 8. When I am anxious I am able to soothe myself independently.
- _____ 9. I solve the problems of my relationships without bringing into focus a third person, object or activity.
- _____ 10. I am able to choose which of my family's beliefs and values I make my own.

SCORE

With acknowledgment to Mary Hicks, Ph.D.; Paul Gilbert, MA.; Blake Horne, MA; Ron Hankins, MA
October 20, 1997