

## The Self and Self Processes

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## What is the Self?

An organized collection of concepts that define how we perceive ourselves

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## What Does the Self Do?

- **Self-concepts:** how we define ourselves
- **Self-schemas:** beliefs about the self
- The self guides and colors our perceptions of the social world

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## Main Sources of Who We Are

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- Western cultures (e.g., U.S.)
  - **Independent self**
  - Characterized by:
    - distinctions from others
    - self-reliance
    - self-expression
    - choices
    - personal achievements



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- Eastern cultures (e.g., Japan)
  - **Interdependent self**
  - Characterized by:
    - Connections to others (esp. ingroup)
    - "Fitting in"
    - Role obligations
    - Self-restraint
    - Deferring to the group



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- Evaluating our abilities and opinions by comparing ourselves to others
  - **Upward comparison:** comparing to those better than us
  - **Downward comparison:** comparing to those worse off than us

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- Learning process
  - Establishes sense of competence, and **self-efficacy**
  - Also establishes limits and boundaries



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- Especially close others
    - **Primary groups**
  - **Looking-glass self**



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- Constrain behavior in terms of what is deemed appropriate and adaptive



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