PERFORMANCE OF DELINQUENTS AND NONDELINQUENTS ON THE HIGH
SCHOOL FORM OF THE INDEX OF ADJUSTMENT AND VALUES

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PERFORMANCE OF DELINQUENTS AND NONDELINQUENTS ON THE HIGH
SCHOOL FORM OF THE INDEX OF ADJUSTMENT AND VALUES

THESIS

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The impetus for this study stemmed from the possibility that an old problem, crime and specifically juvenile delinquency, may be explained and affected by new knowledge and new techniques.

Several schools of criminology have developed during the last two centuries. The Classical School in 1775, the Cartographic School in 1830, the Socialist School in 1850, the Typological School in 1875, and the Sociological School in 1915 have all at one time claimed to hold the complete explanation of criminal behavior (17, p. 52). They all in time proved themselves inadequate, and even the current Multiple-Factor Theory is being found inadequate (17, 18).

"We are beginning to discover that human beings do not behave in response to stimuli alone but in terms of their perceptions to those stimuli" (4, p. 198). In other words, it is not the event but the meaning of the event which is important to the individual's behavior. "Perhaps in the search for dominant factors in personality the obvious has been too long neglected because it is obvious and therefore seemed unworthy of attention" (13, p. 154).
Self concept theorists believe that one cannot understand and predict human behavior without knowledge of the individual’s conscious perceptions of his environment, and of his self as he sees it in relation to the environment (18, p. 6). Because of the central role accorded to conscious perceptions, cognitions, and feelings, and the attempt to see behavior in terms of meanings that exist for the individual, these theorists are often labeled "phenomenological" (4).

Background

Reference to the self was first made by Immanuel Kant. He made a distinction between the subjective and the objective meanings of the self, or the "I" and the "me" (8). The self was later discussed philosophically by Schopenhauer (15). William James, in his chapter on the self in Principles of Psychology, recognized two distinct concepts with regard to the self. "The 'I' is the self as observer, or knower; the self that perceives the world about it and reacts to this world. The 'Me' is the self as observed" (7, p. 291).

James portrays his concept of the self, as did Kant and Schopenhauer, in a rather philosophical and metaphysical manner (7). The self, then, for the most part seemed unworthy of scientific psychological experimentation. Recently, however, with increased interest in the phenomenological approach and the innovations of more objective techniques,
psychologists have shown renewed interest in the concept of the self.

Coleman maintains that psychologists when referring to the self are thinking in terms of a conceptual structure rather than a physical one. He states, "Like gravity, the self cannot be observed directly but is inferred from various phenomena which can be observed and which seem to operate according to some unifying principle" (7, p. 63). The self, in other words, is not a mystical entity but a useful and seemingly necessary construct for explaining many aspects of individual behavior.

Hall and Lindzey, speaking of the self-concept, state that "... it is a concept that falls within the domain of a scientific psychology. Self theory represents a serious attempt to account for certain phenomena and to conceptualize one's observations or certain aspects of behavior" (6, p. 468).

Maslow maintains that, "It is possible to study this inner nature scientifically and objectively" (2, p. 35).

The self-concept, then, is a theoretical construct that is capable of scientific experimentation. The position assigned to the self-concept and the degree of importance attributed to it in the explanation of behavior has varied among the theorists. Several attempts at definition and explanation will be studied.
Rogers has attached primary importance to the self and the self-concept.

The self-concept, or self-structure, may be thought of as an organized configuration of perceptions of the self which are admissible to awareness. It is composed of such elements as the perceptions of one's characteristics and abilities; the percepts and concepts of the self in relation to others and to the environment; the value qualities which are perceived as associated with experiences and objects; and goals and ideals which are perceived as having positive or negative valence (14; pp. 136-137).

Raimy defines the self-concept as "the more or less organized perceptual object resulting from present and past self-observations" (13, p. 154).

Coleman attempts to define two aspects of the individual's experience of the self. He defines the **Self as Object** as ". . . the individual's perception and evaluation of himself as something distinct from other persons and things."

The other aspect, the **Self as Process**, he defines as ". . . the individual's perception of himself as a knower, striver, and doer with facilities for perceiving, evaluating, choosing, and planning in reference to himself" (3, p. 63).

Snygg and Combs describe the phenomenal self (i.e., self-concept) as "... all those parts of the phenomenal field which an individual experiences as part or characteristic of himself" (16, p. 58).
According to Murphy, "The self is a thing perceived and it is also a thing conceived; in both senses it is constantly responded to" (11, p. 479).

Wylie explored the concept of self and attempts to define it as a learned constellation of perceptions, cognitions, and values and that, "an important part of this learning comes from observing the reactions one gets from other persons" (18, p. 121).

One might ask at this point, "How is an individual's concept of himself formed and/or developed?" What effect does an individual's concept of himself have on his personality and his behavior pattern?" Also, "What relationship is there between self-acceptance and adjustment?" The questions will be taken in that order and a few of the opinions of some self-theorists will be cited.

Coleman believes that the newborn infant has no sense of self. He does not know where his body leaves off and his environment begins (3, p. 63). "As the infant interacts with his environment he gradually builds up concepts about himself, about the environment, and about himself in relation to the environment" (14, p. 498). Only gradually does the infant learn to recognize himself as a single me (3, p. 63).

In the process of developing the concept of himself, Snygg and Combs state that, "The child can only see himself
in terms of his experiences and in terms of the treatment he receives from those responsible for his development" (16, p. 83). "As the individual develops, his self-concept is broadened by his experiences and is shaped by the social roles he plays" (3, pp. 63-64).

As Piaget portrays it, "The self as an object is discovered, interpreted, put into context, and adapted to..." (12, p. 150).

Rogers' attempt at explanation of the growth and development of the self-concept relies on interaction. He postulates that:

As a result of interaction with the environment and particularly as a result of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of the self is formed—an organized, fluid, but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the "I" or the "me," together with values attached to these concepts (14, p. 136).

Lecky believes that, "The personality develops as a result of actual contacts with the world, and incorporates into itself the meanings derived from external contacts" (16, p. 155). This organization not only defines an individual's role in life, but furnishes him with standards which he feels obliged to maintain (10, p. 155).

Combs interprets the self-concept development simply by saying that it is learned and that people discover their self-concepts from the kinds of experiences they have had
from life. Also, the self-concept continues to grow throughout life (2).

The impact of the self-concept on behavior is discussed by many of the theorists. Coleman maintains that:

Because the ongoing activities of the human system are organized and integrated in relation to self, each individual tends to establish a relatively consistent life style. He has a characteristic way of doing, thinking, reacting, and growing. . . . These typical patterns of behavior are always consistent with the self-concept (3, p. 69).

According to Rainey, "The Self-Concept Theory predicates that each individual's perception of himself is of ultimate psychological significance in organized behavior" (13, p. 154). "Our general behavior then is to a large extent regulated and organized by what we perceive ourselves to be. . . ." (13, p. 154).

In discussing an individual's behavior, Kelly states that,

We feed the psychological self through perceptive processes. . . . The perceptive stuff of growth provides the experiential background from which we operate. This controls what we do with the body. The quality of the perceptive stuff of growth therefore determines the quality of the behavior of the individual (2, p. 13).

Rogers postulates that, "Most of the ways of behaving which are adopted by the organism are those which are consistent with the concept of self" (14, p. 507).
Adler's concept is that of a creative self which searches for experiences which will aid in fulfilling the individual's unique style of life. These experiences will be created in the event they are not found. So to Adler, the self is a very important cause of behavior (1).

Lazarus believes that most behavior is organized around efforts to preserve and enhance the self (9, p. 62).

Lecky states that the self-concept not only defines an individual's role in life, "... but furnishes him with standards which he feels obligated to maintain" (10, p. 154).

Coleman believes that an individual adopts the values and attitudes that are expected of one in his position (3, p. 69).

According to Combs (4), researchers are beginning to discover that the kind of self-concept an individual possesses determines, by large measure, whether he is maladjusted or well adjusted.
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CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

There have been several studies conducted indicating
the relationship between the concept a person has of him-
self and his level of adjustment. Emory L. Cowen (6) used
a modified Brownfain Self-Rating Inventory together with
several other personality and sociopsychological measures
on fifty-eight college undergraduates in order to determine
their level of adjustment, self-concept, and degree of
self-acceptance. Cowen found that the students with the
more positive self-concepts showed more signs of good
adjustment. Also, the students with more positive self-
concepts were more self-accepting.

Calvin and Holtzman (2) conducted a study using
seventy-nine male fraternity students and found that the
more poorly adjusted the individual, the more self-
deprivative he was.

With the use of a Q-sort technique, Chase (3) could
distinguish between a group of adjusted hospital patients
and three groups of maladjusted hospital patients.
Adjusted patients rated themselves as being more like their
ideals, but both adjusted and maladjusted patients held
similar conceptions of the ideal self. Also, Motoori (10) found that the "ideal selves" of ten juvenile thieves were quite similar to that of the controls.

Mary Engel (8) tested a group of adolescents for self-concept and adjustment. Two years later she tested the same group and found that persons who persisted with a negative self-concept over the two-year period gave evidence of significantly more maladjustment.

A Q-sort technique used by Balester (1) significantly differentiated between groups of subjects with different social behavior patterns. The magnitude of the positive Q-sort self-concept scores was found to be related to the quality of adjustment.

In a study of Dymond (7), an index of adjustment demonstrated that a group of persons desiring therapy were less well-adjusted, as measures by expert clinicians, than a group not desiring therapy.

Some studies find that how much a person sees himself as being like he wishes himself to be implies a level of adjustment. Gene M. Smith (14) obtained scores on six self-concept measures for twenty-four college men. He found that men who had a high discrepancy between "self" and "ideal-self" also evaluated themselves unfavorably.

Chodorkoff (4) found that the greater the relationship between the perceived and ideal self, the more adequate the
individual's personal adjustment as measured by a clinical evaluation of projective and biographic material.

Hanlon, Hofstaetter, and O'Connor (9) studied the relationship between measures of adjustment and the congruency of self-concept and concept of ideal self in a sample of seventy-eight high school students. The California Test of Personality and a modified Q-sort technique were used. They found that the correlation between the self-ideal congruence and total adjustment was positive and highly significant. It was concluded that the use of measures of self-ideal congruence in evaluating personality maladjustment appeared justified.

Raymaker (11) obtained discrepancy scores between the self-concept and concept of ideal self, and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory was given to all subjects. Eight of the scales tended to substantiate the hypothesis by significant and positive correlations that self-concept and concept of ideal self discrepancy are associated with adjustment.

Several studies have been conducted that claim to find a positive relationship between level of adjustment and self-acceptance. Sarbin and Rosenberg (13), in a study on normal students and students diagnosed as neurotic, found that the neurotics were less self-accepting.
Tamkin (15) found that schizophrenics had a significantly lower self-acceptance score on the Scott-Duke Questionnaire than did non-patients.

Corrie (5) used groups of hospital staff members and hospitalized patients in a study of self-acceptance. All groups were equated for age and sex. Schizophrenics were found to be more self-accepting than neurotics or normals and neurotics to be less self-accepting than normals.

Considerable space will be devoted to this last study by Rogers, et al., because of the nature of the study and its relationship to the present study. Rogers, Kell, and McNeil (12) selected a group of delinquent children for whom there was an adequate amount of diagnostic information. Follow-up reports of adjustment covering a period of approximately two years were conducted. They made ratings of eight factors in the child's background and experience which might presumably be related to future behavior and adjustment. Two years after the diagnostic study, they made independent ratings of the adjustment of the individual. The material was analyzed for possible correlations between each of the eight factors and later adjustment. Also, correlations between all factors taken together and later adjustment were made in order to find whether the behavior of these delinquents may have in any way been predicted by that method, i.e., from the information available at the time of the initial study.
Results of this study revealed three very significant implications. The authors state, "If the present studies are confirmed in their central findings by further research, then there are three broad implications that deserve consideration." The first implication is that the individual's perceptions of himself and of reality are the most important determiners of behavior. A second implication is that the results of this study would point toward a drastic revision of the methods of dealing with or treating individuals who exhibit delinquent or problem behavior.

Vast amounts are expended in order to alter the child's whole environment, . . . probationary supervision, . . . the alleviation of physical deficiencies, but practically nothing on any direct approach to the problem of revising the child's attitude toward himself (12, p. 189).

The final implication of this study is that if the individual's view of himself is so important, then a great deal of research is needed in this area.

Purpose of the Study

The background material seems to indicate that there is a theoretical construct that can be defined as "the self" and which can be measured objectively. Also, "the self" seems to be a product of an individual's perception of himself obtained through interaction with his environment.

Research summarized in the preceding section implies that the more negatively a person views himself, the more
self-devaluating he will be. Related research also seems to indicate that the degree of relationship found between a person's concept of self and his concept of ideal self would seem to indicate the level of adjustment. Some researchers feel that there is a relationship between the adjustment level of an individual and the degree to which he will accept himself. Also, a lack of relationship between the concept of ideal self and adjustment has been found.

This research implies that there is a relationship between an individual's concept of himself and the way in which he will behave. That is to say, an individual's behavior is the product of perceiving, or in other words, people behave in terms of personal meanings, i.e., self-concept. What does this mean to juvenile delinquency? It means that the present way of explaining deviant behavior, in terms of circumstances surrounding the individual or forces exerted on him, is an inadequate explanation and will never reach the predictive stage. It also means that the current methods of treatment are futile since present means employ methods of controlling forces, punishing, manipulating, and directing in an impersonal objective way. It is believed that the delinquent has a self-structure that he himself must change if improvement is to occur and that
methods of treatment should be consistent with this view. Therefore, this study is an attempt to obtain information on the self-concept and juvenile delinquency.

On the basis of "self" theory, it was predicted that delinquents would have a lower self-concept score and would be less self-accepting than nondelinquents. It was also predicted that nondelinquents would show less self-ideal discrepancy than the delinquents, but that both groups would have similar concepts of ideal self.

The following hypotheses were tested:

1. Delinquents and nondelinquents differ significantly in concept of self as measured by the HSIAV.

2. Delinquents and nondelinquents differ significantly in acceptance of self as measured by the HSIAV.

3. Delinquents and nondelinquents do not differ significantly in concept of ideal self as measured by the HSIAV.

4. Delinquents and nondelinquents differ significantly in discrepancy between self-concept and concept of ideal self as measured by the HSIAV.

Definitions

Basic terms and concepts important to this study are defined as follows:

Self-concept.—The more or less organized perceptual object resulting from present and past self-observations.
Concept of ideal self.--This refers to the view an individual has of himself as he wishes to be.

Self-ideal discrepancy.--The measure obtained by computing the difference between self-concept and the concept of ideal self.

Acceptance of self.--This pertains to the degree to which a person is tolerant of his self-image.

Delinquent.--A delinquent is defined as one adjudged by the court as delinquent and placed in the custody of the Texas Youth Council.

A nondelinquent.--A nondelinquent is defined as one who has been a lifelong resident of Wichita County and has never been referred to the Wichita County Juvenile Department.
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CHAPTER III

THE EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

In Chapter I it was stated that the primary purpose of this study was to obtain more information on the self-concept and juvenile delinquency. Predictions were made on the basis of self-theory. The High School Form of the Index of Adjustment and Values (HSIAV) was then administered to a group of delinquents and to a group of nondelinquents, and comparisons were made between the total groups matched on sex, age, and race.

Subjects

Delinquent
The delinquent group was composed of thirty female subjects selected from a population of inmates at the Gainesville State Training School for Girls at Gainesville, Texas. The subjects were all Caucasian and ranged in age from fourteen to seventeen.

Nondelinquent
The nondelinquent group was composed of twenty-six female high school students obtained from two homeroom
classes at Rider High School in Wichita Falls, Texas. The students in the high school were primarily from lower-middle class families. The subjects were all Caucasian and ranged in age from fourteen to seventeen.

Procedure

The delinquent subjects had been previously selected by the staff of the school according to the criteria mentioned in a previous section. Participation in the investigation was on a voluntary basis, and several inmates were excused because they objected to serving as subjects. The test was administered to approximately fifteen subjects at a time. Two administrations of the test were made. Data were gathered on thirty inmates.

The data for the nondelinquents were gathered in one administration of the test to voluntary female subjects from two homeroom classes at Rider High School in Wichita Falls, Texas. Data were gathered on twenty-six students.

The significance between the mean scores for each of the four parts of the HSIAV were tested by $t$ tests.

Results

The High School Form of Index of Adjustment and Values requires that a subject make three ratings on a five-point scale for each of thirty-seven traits. These ratings are
arranged in three columns which have been designated by the authors as concept of self, acceptance of self, and the concept of ideal self. A fourth score, called discrepancy, is obtained by totaling the differences between concept of self and concept of the ideal self. The four analyses performed in this section related to the results obtained on these four variables. Table I summarizes the data for the four analyses.

**TABLE I**

COMPARISON OF HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND INMATES ON THE HSIAV TEST (N = 26 HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS AND 30 INMATES)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>High School Ss</th>
<th>Inmates</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of Self</td>
<td>140.08</td>
<td>8.48</td>
<td>126.83</td>
<td>18.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Self</td>
<td>141.15</td>
<td>21.22</td>
<td>132.60</td>
<td>23.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of Ideal Self</td>
<td>167.38</td>
<td>9.55</td>
<td>152.67</td>
<td>23.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Ideal Discrepancy</td>
<td>31.23</td>
<td>9.04</td>
<td>39.53</td>
<td>14.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not significant.

In the first analysis, the mean score for thirty delinquents on the concept of self measure was found to be 126.83,
The mean score of the high school students was 140.08, with a standard deviation of 8.48. A test of significance for the difference between means of the two groups yielded a t value of 3.46, which is significant at the .01 level of confidence.

The data were next analyzed for mean differences in acceptance of self. The high school students obtained a mean score of 141.15, with a standard deviation of 21.22. Delinquent subjects mean score was found to be 132.60, with a standard deviation of 23.71. Differences between the two mean scores resulted in a t value of 1.42 which is significant at the 0.2 level.

The third analysis was for concept of ideal self scores. The mean score of the thirty delinquents was 152.67, with a standard deviation of 23.12. High school students obtained a mean score of 167.38, with a standard deviation of 9.55. A comparison of the two group means gave a t value of 3.19 which is significant at the .01 level.

The fourth analysis was for the discrepancy scores, i.e., the differences between the concept of self and the concept of ideal self. Analysis of the discrepancy score for the delinquent group resulted in a mean score of 39.53, with a standard deviation of 14.73. Mean discrepancy score for the high school students was 31.23, with a standard deviation
of 9.04. The value of the $t$ for the difference between these means is 2.49, which is significant at the .02 level.

Discussion

The analysis of results demonstrates that the delinquents and the nondelinquents differ markedly relative to the self-concept variables measures by the High School Form of the Index of Adjustment and Values. The prediction that the nondelinquents would score higher on concept of self was supported. Delinquents evaluated themselves less positive than did the high school students. Analysis supports the contention that a higher discrepancy between self-concept and ideal self-concept would be found among the inmates. These results indicate that the delinquents felt more inadequate relative to his ideal than did the high school subjects. A third prediction, that nondelinquents would be more self-accepting than the delinquents, was not supported. The .05 level of confidence maintained throughout this investigation was not reached. Although a strong trend was found for the inmates to be less self-accepting, the null hypothesis was accepted.

The hypothesis that the two groups do not differ relative to concept of ideal self was clearly refuted. Surprisingly, the results demonstrate that the delinquents and the nondelinquents differ in their standard of
perfection; i.e., ideal self. The high school subjects' mean score on the concept of ideal self was significantly higher than the mean score of the delinquent subjects. This finding does not agree with that of Motoori's which was presented earlier. The results of incarceration could possibly have affected this score. The experience of being in an institution probably does have an effect upon the individual, and more investigation is necessary before a conclusion can be reached.

While the self-concept offers a new and interesting approach to delinquency, a great deal more research is needed.

Relative to the use of the self-concept approach in the study of delinquents, several recommendations might be made. The Index of Adjustment and Values could be applied to groups of different types of delinquents within the same institution. Selection might be based upon such differences as types of crime committed, age, sex, etc. It is also suggested that the Index of Adjustment and Values be used in longitudinal studies in which it is given to groups not yet detected as delinquent.

Summary and Conclusions

Scores on four self-concept variables were obtained for thirty delinquent females and twenty-six high school females.
These four variables were: concept of self, acceptance of self, concept of ideal self, and the discrepancy between the self-concept and ideal self-concept. Comparisons were made to determine differences in the performance between the two groups.

The conclusions were as follows:

1. The results support the hypothesis that delinquents and nondelinquents differ significantly on concept of self. Furthermore, the prediction that the delinquents would score lower on self-concept was supported.

2. The data confirm the hypothesis that delinquents and nondelinquents differ significantly on self-ideal discrepancy. The prediction that the nondelinquents would show less self-ideal discrepancy was also supported.

3. The data lend some support to the hypothesis that delinquents and nondelinquents differ on self-acceptance. The prediction that the nondelinquents would be more self-accepting was not entirely supported, although a strong trend in this direction was found.

4. The hypothesis that delinquents and nondelinquents do not differ on concept of ideal self was clearly refuted. The results showed that the nondelinquents’ scores on the concept of ideal self were significantly higher than the scores of the delinquents.
It was suggested that further research was needed, especially that of a longitudinal nature.
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APPENDIX

"SELF" INSTRUCTIONS FOR HSIAV

There is a need for each of us to know more about ourselves, but seldom do we have an opportunity to look at ourselves as we are or as we would like to be. On the next page is a list of terms that to a certain degree describe people. Take each term separately and apply it to yourself by completing the following sentence:

I AM A (AN) ______ PERSON.

The first word in the list is jolly, so you would substitute this term in the above sentence. It would read—

I am a jolly person.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLUMN I (next page)

Then decide HOW MUCH OF THE TIME this statement is like you and rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 5 according to the following key.

1. Seldom, is this like me.
2. Occasionally, this is like me.
3. About half of the time, this is like me.
4. A good deal of the time, this is like me.
5. Most of the time, this is like me.

EXAMPLE: Beside the term JOLLY, number 2 is inserted to indicate that—occasionally, I am a jolly person.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLUMN II (next page)

Now go to Column II. Use one of the statements given below to tell HOW YOU FEEL about yourself as described in Column I.

1. I very much dislike being as I am in this respect.
2. I dislike being as I am in this respect.
3. I neither dislike being as I am nor like being as I am in this respect.
4. I like being as I am in this respect.
5. I like very much being as I am in this respect.

You will select the number beside the statement that tells how you feel about the way you are and insert the number in Column II.

EXAMPLE: In Column II beside the term JOLLY, number 1 is inserted to indicate that I dislike very much being as I am in respect to the term, jolly. Note that being as I am always refers to the way you described yourself in Column I.
INSTRUCTIONS FOR COLUMN III (next page)

Finally, go to Column III; using the same term, complete the following sentence:

I WOULD LIKE TO BE A (AN) _______ PERSON.

Then decide HOW MUCH OF THE TIME you would like this trait to be characteristic of you and rate yourself on the following five point scale.

1. Seldom, would I like this to be me.
2. Occasionally, I would like this to be me.
3. About half of the time, I would like this to be me.
4. A good deal of the time, I would like this to be me.
5. Most of the time, I would like this to be me.

You will select the number beside the phrase that tells how much of the time you would like to be this kind of person and insert the number in Column III.

EXAMPLE: In Column III beside the term JOLLY, the number 5 is inserted to indicate that most of the time, I would like to be this kind of person.

Start with the word ACTIVE and fill in Columns I, II, and III before going on to the next word. There is no time limit. Be honest with yourself so that your description will be a true measure of how you look at yourself.
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