

How Well Do You Know Yourself?

Perhaps you have heard it said that you can't really love someone until you learn to love yourself. There is a lot of wisdom and truth in that saying, but in some ways, that old adage leaves something out. You can't really love yourself until you know yourself. Learning who you are is an important step in learning to love and appreciate yourself and it is an important part of the process that will prepare you to enter the dating game.

Knowing who you are entails having an understanding of where you have been in life and where you are going. Every experience you have had in life has helped to shape the person that you are. That doesn't mean that you are a victim of your circumstances. It isn't so much the circumstances of your life that shape you as it is the way in which you choose to react to those circumstances.

If you really want to understand who you are, spend time analyzing the major events of your life and consider how they affected you. Take time to think about your family and contemplate how their influence has helped to shape your morals, self esteem, and even your outlook on life. Have past relationships jaded the way that you look at love? Have the people you

As you reflect on your past, decide whether or not the events of your past are affecting your present and ultimately your future. For example, are you bitter about a past relationship? Until you can forgive the person that caused the bitterness, those feelings can leak into a new relationship, causing it to turn sour.

Perhaps the issues of your past have nothing to do with the people you have encountered. It could be that as a child you were overweight, too short or too tall, or generally felt awkward and now as an adult, you still feel as if you were that child that didn't fit in. Understanding why you feel that way is an important step, not only in knowing who you are, but in becoming comfortable with yourself.

Knowing yourself also means that while you realize you aren't perfect, you basically like yourself and you are comfortable with the person that you have become. People that truly know who they are understand the balance between knowing their faults, so they may work on them, and beating themselves up over faults only they see. If you aren't satisfied with your inner or outer person, chances are, you won't enjoy the experience of dating. As you take the time to get to know yourself, figure out the things that you like about you. Make a list of all the things about yourself that you are proud of and concentrate on letting those aspects of your personality, character, and being shine through to everyone that you meet.

Dating involves sharing yourself with another person, so you want to share the best possible person that you can be. As you begin to learn who you are,

determine the things about yourself that you want to improve. Perhaps you are impatient, not always careful with your spending, or quick to say something without thinking it through. These are traits you can work on, but only if you realize that they exist. Taking the time to get to know yourself will help you to determine if there are areas of your personality or character that you should work to improve.

Knowing yourself also means you know what you like and what you don't like. Having an understanding of what you like and dislike in life will help you to figure out what type of person you are looking for. Figuring out your likes and dislikes can be about surface things as simple as realizing that you are a morning person, you dislike a certain type of music, or you adore sushi. It can also take a more complex turn as you discover that you like to spend some time alone, or you enjoy being the center of attention, or you like to be in charge of every situation in your life.

Knowing who you are is one step in preparing to enter a healthy relationship. Just because you become half of a couple, doesn't mean that you let go of the unique individual that you are. Rather it means blending the attributes of two individuals into an exciting partnership. Understanding who you are will help bring your relationship unequaled fulfillment.