

Abstract

This paper is an attempt to proffer a self-theory model that exemplifies the percepts, constructs, and ideas contained in the current writing on the subject of the self. The model, the Systemic Self, has been formulated by eclectic reference to significant research and is presented as a schematic diagram that depicts a systematic arrangement of the psychological constructs and postulates of the self. The thrust of this endeavour is directed towards initiating a systematic and overall approach to the theory of self.

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The Construction of a Systemic Self Model

Introduction

The "self" has been the subject of numerous publications during the last few decades. The attention that has been given to the subject has mostly been posed as "self-concept" studies. Current questions pertaining to the self are now being framed in terms of theory building rather than concept formulations. The following indicates this concern:

What is it that consists of concepts that are hierarchically organized and internally consistent; that assimilates knowledge, yet, itself, is an object of knowledge; that is dynamic, but must maintain a degree of stability; that is unified and differentiated at the same time; that is necessary for solving problems in the real world; and that is subject to sudden collapse, producing total disorganization when this occurs? The answer. . . I submit that self-concept in a self-theory¹

Embarkation upon a study of the self-organization reveals an immense mass of subordinate detail. An effective way to cope with the significant detail is to arrange the material in a systematic fashion so that it covers the whole domain in purview. Rearranging the material en bloc soon reveals a form of structure that depicts the processes involved in the arrangement. This format was adopted during a detailed study of self theories. During this review of self theories appropriate material was formulated into specific categories that related to common topics. Rearranging the formulations, using a common terminology to identify each distinct category, soon displayed a form of structure that seemed to relate each process involved in the overall functioning of the self. This method noted that most of the researchers had need of a common percept to explain certain ideas. Grouping these ideas allowed the percepts and concepts of notable researchers to be stated in the form of postulates. Upon these postulates, derived from the investigations of well documented studies, a model was constructed in the form of an analogical schematic diagram.

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Schematic diagrams have been used by many previous researchers in the past. An example of this methodology of attempting to convey ideas was used by Broadbent to show "a possible information flow"² between senses and effectors.

The purpose of the diagram used in this paper is to portray the logic arrangement of construct subsets that can be used to proffer a codification of postulates that pertain to self theory.

The Construction of a Self Model

The model discussed in this paper was specifically developed from a review of research literature concerned with the "self". The material was initially formulated into sets of information that noted the various processes that seemed to pertain to the notion of the self. These were the becoming, developing, and growing aspects of the self (The Global Self); the ways in which the self perceived the environment in which development was occurring (The Perceiving Self); the ways in which the self overtly reacted with the environment (The Overt Self); the ways in which the self maintained a state of balance in harmony with the environment (The Maintaining Self); and, most importantly, the ways in which an accumulation of past experience within an environment formulated an image of the self (The Accumulated Self). The relationship of these constructs, and the postulates that relate to each, formed the structure of the model.

These five categories, based on extrapolated postulates, were "constructed" to form a schematic diagram representative of a self theory model. This diagram, Figure 1, The Systemic Self, depicts in schematic form the interrelationship of the five subsystems. The diagram portrays the prime functions of a self system. An individual relates to the environment in a sensory and motor fashion. The stimuli that is *sensed* by five types of *receptors* is *perceived* by the individual in a manner that *decodes*, *adjusts*, and *sorts* the impinging information. This perceived information is then *processed* and retained as a learned *product*. The *accumulation* of information regarding *knowledge*, *roles*, *motives*, *values*, and *habitual* characteristics is available as a response capability of the individual. This stored data is a conglomeration of learned information which, when required for psycho-motor response, is *synthesized* by subjecting *selected* bits of pertinent information to a filtering *defense mechanism*, thereafter this evaluated and modified information, *consistent* and in *harmony*, is encoded into a *verbal* and/or *non-verbal* response pattern of *overt action*.

The Global Self

The self is contained within a framework that has access to the external environment in two modes. The sensory mode allows the sampling of external stimuli whereas the motor mode allows overt action. These two modes provide an input and output to the other subsystems that make up the total systemic self system. The organized aspect of the self is noted by Vickers in his statement: "It views him as himself a system, capable in some degree of self-organization in the interest of both stability and self-realization"³.

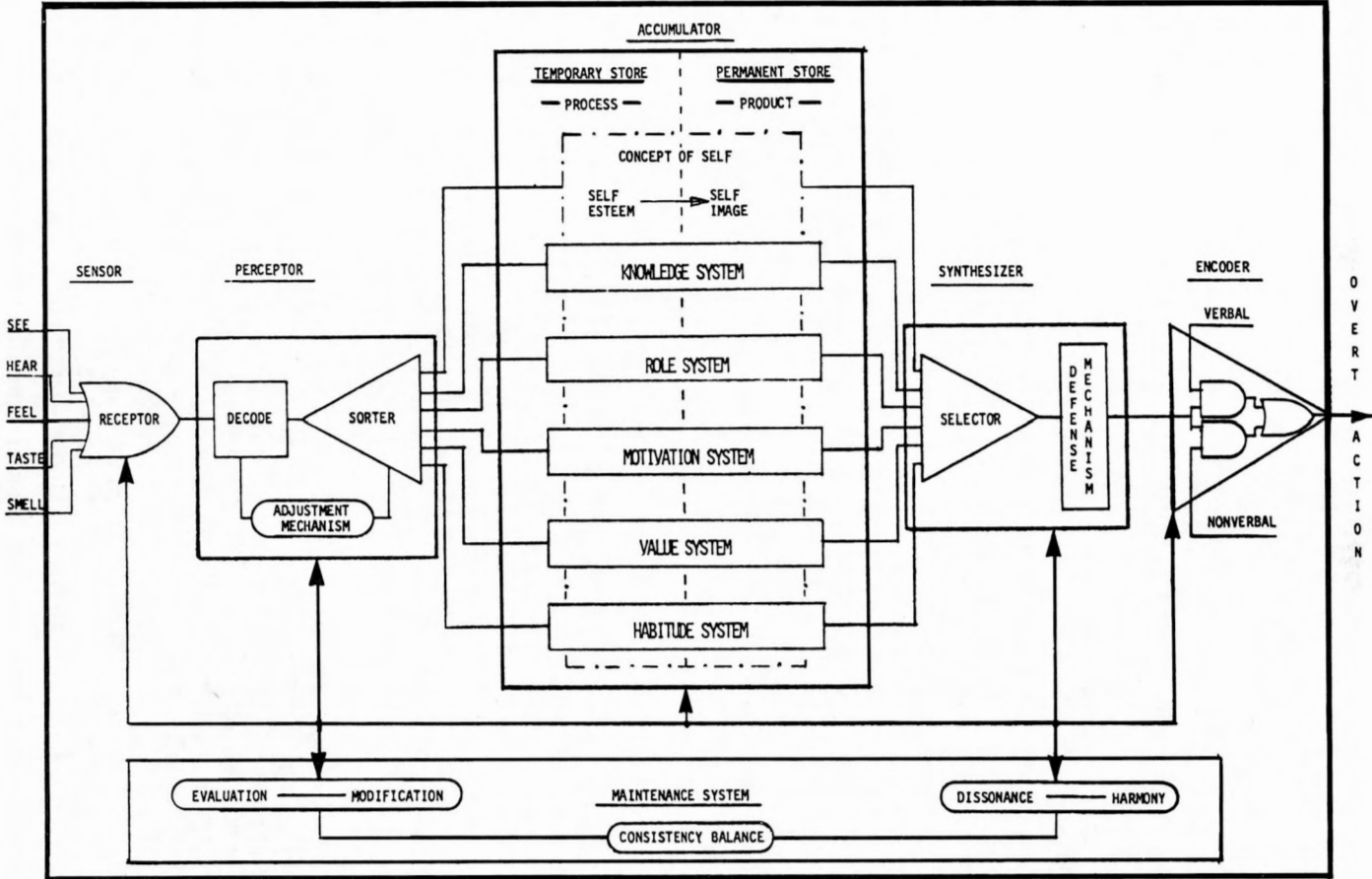
The above statement makes reference to the claim of the model in purview that it could be labelled as "The Systemic Self". This assumption provides the basis for the structure of the model and is stated as the first of the postulates pertaining to it:

Postulate 1: The self is systemic

The relationship of the psychological and biological factors of the self was noted

Figure 1

THE SYSTEMIC SELF



by Mead in his discussion of the *Self and the Organism*, in which he writes:

In our statement of the development of intelligence we have already suggested that the language process is essential for the development of the self. The self has character which is different from that of the physiological organism proper. The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there at birth but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relating to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process.⁴

In this statement, Mead has noted other assumptions that can readily be stated as postulates of the overall qualities of self. He has made note of the viability of the self apart from that of the physiological aspects of an individual; consequently it may be stated that:

Postulate 2: The self has a character which is different from that of the physiological organism proper.

Mead also noted that the process of growth is inherent in self development and that it grows as a result of the language process. Most of the current research studies would concur with this idea and as a result, these evident factual statements may be written as:

Postulate 3: The self germinates by the process of social experience and activity; and

Postulate 4: Language process is essential for the development of self.

These four postulates are not intended as an exhaustive list, but rather as those that note the overall global structure of the model which is depicted as an analogical schematic diagram.

The Perceiving Self

The self as an observer is a subfunction of the systematic self and does not exist as a separate entity capable of exclusive action, but rather as a mutually inclusive subsystem of the overall framework of the total systemic self. The development of postulates for this subsystem have also been gleaned from the research literature that note the perceiving aspects of the self. These concepts have been utilized and placed under proposed headings that depict the functions of the perceiving self. Basic postulates that relate to these are stipulated as a result of discussion of each of the following subsections: the sensors, perceptors, and adjustment mechanisms.

Sensor: the physical body, in which all human beings are housed, interacts with others and with the environment by means of the senses with which each of us is equipped. These senses perform the function of converting and transducing one form of energy into another so that the Central Nervous System (CNS) of the body can function. Light waves are transduced by the eyes as part of our visual process. Sound waves are converted by the ears, and so on. There are, however, limitations to the amount of energy these organs can process. Threshold limitations are set on all sensory apparatus: the eyes can only detect a certain band of sound waves. Combs and Snygg⁵ note the need for the possession of adequate sensory equipment and the limitations that can beset the physical organism.

A postulate that forms the underpinnings for this subsystem is:

Postulate 5: The self observes and relates to the environment through physiological senses.

Perceptor: The function of the perceptor is to *decode* the sensory stimuli being impinged upon it by the sensory receptors and to *sort* the resultant information for appropriate retention. This process is not automatic in as much that an intervening *adjustment mechanism* modifies the information being processed. The adjustment and modification process is complex and has been the focus of numerous studies. Hamacheck has defined perception as "the process by which we select, organize, and interpret sensory stimulation into a meaningful and coherent picture of the world".⁶ Some of the factors that affect this process have been noted by Combs *et al* namely: "Perceiving takes time, most perceptions, the individual makes are functions of previous perceptions, what is perceived is not what exists, but what one believes exists. What is perceived is what we have learned to perceive as a result of our past opportunities or experience."⁷ Similar postulates have also been mentioned by Keltner.⁸

Adjustment Mechanism

Erb in a book devoted to an integrated interpretation of goal - directed behavior, *The Psychology of the Emerging Self*, discusses "the adjustment mechanisms". He states:

A person enters every social situation with a picture of himself as he likes to see himself and when he does not behave in a way that is consistent with his image, then he has two courses of action; he may change the picture of himself, which is very demanding and difficult; or he may distort the experience by turning to the use of adjustment mechanisms.⁹

Erb notes that "suppression and repression, two of the most prominent adjustment mechanisms, are assumed to underlie the use of all adjustment mechanisms". He defines suppression as "the conscious determination and effort not to recognize a certain aspect of experience . . . Repression, on the other hand, represents the complete banishing of thoughts, wishes, and experiences from conscious awareness".¹⁰

The model proffered in this study distinguishes between "adjustment mechanisms" and "defense mechanisms"; otherwise, the model of the systemic self would readily concur with Erb. Adjustment mechanisms can be defined as suppressive means: they consciously operate to recognize certain aspects of experience. Adjustment mechanisms are functions of perception, whereas, defense mechanisms are functions of thought synthesization and behavioural encoding. They assist the self from "acting" in a manner that is not conducive to person's self-image. The aspects of defense mechanisms are discussed later. Although Erb does not make a distinction in this regard, Hilgard does, by identifying two types of mechanisms: "the mechanisms as defenses against anxiety and the mechanisms as self-deceptive". He states: "There are two chief ways in which we deceive ourselves. One is by denial of impulses, . . . the second through disguise".¹¹ Adjustment mechanisms can become rigid in their function of monitoring the decoding and sorting process of the perceptor. Erb notes that perceptual rigidity is "another way of allowing a person's inner wish to dominate his perception of external reality".¹²

The postulates of this subsystem can be stated as:

Postulate 6: The self decodes sensory stimulation by selecting, organizing, and interpreting the information into a meaningful and coherent picture; and

Postulate 7: The self uses adjustment mechanisms to control perceived information.

The postulates that have been related to the perceiving self are stated above; they are in no way an exhaustive list but rather basic to the understanding of a self model. They are important to individuals in their understanding of themselves and others.

The Accumulated Self

The Perceiving Self, suggests that through the physiological senses information relating to the environment is received, decoded, adjusted, and sorted. After the process of perception, the gathered information is retained during the functioning of the accumulator subsystem of the self.

The Accumulated Self is also a subsystem of the total self model. It is representative of the retention of learned behavior characteristics of the self. Within the framework is contained the important components of self-image. These are important in that they contain the "Who am I now" notion of self. A person's self-image is contained within the knowledge that they have accumulated, the roles that they are able to perform, the values that they have espoused, the ways in which they are motivated, and the personal style, habit, and temperament that they exhibit.

The accumulator of the systemic self is a storage device whereby learned behavior is retained. The model, The Systemic Self, indicates a division which is indicative of the temporary processes that take place during learning and the more permanent product aspects of memory. All perceived information received is processed and retained, and is available for recall on a temporal basis. Only some of this temporal information is processed to become a more permanent product of the self. Avila, Combs, and Purkey made note of this dynamic aspect when they stated:

The more we study the self concept, the more it becomes apparent how crucial it is to the understanding of behavior. It is at the very center of an individual's personal organization and the frame of reference for his every act: the self concept is learned especially from the experience of the individual with the significant people in his world in the course of growing up. It is both product and process.¹³

The diagram also depicts the idea that the self-concept is at the very center of an individual's organization by showing that it is involved in both process and product and that it transcends the bounds of knowledge, role, habitude, motivation, and value systems.

The diagram also notes that the concepts of self, self-esteem, and self-image are the very central core of the systemic self. Self-esteem is processed to become self-image. Although self-image is a product located in the permanent storage of the accumulator, it can only be identified as a factual identity at any given moment. It is the "Who am I now". Continual learning experiences can change self-image so that a newer portrait of self can be read into the permanent storage. Raimy has noted that aspect: "The self concept not only influences behavior but is itself altered and restructured by behavior and unsatisfied needs".¹⁴ Combs *et al* also note this phenomenon when they stated:

The individual's own fundamental need requires change in his concept of self. One cannot be truly adequate in a changing world without adapting to the changes going on about him. A static self concept existing in a moving world would soon be out of touch with the world about it. An adequate self must be stable but not rigid; it must be changing but not fluctuating.¹⁵

Combs *et al* have devoted considerable attention to the topic mentioned above. They trace "how the self concept changes", note the necessity for change, the resistance to change, and also the conditions for change in the self.¹⁶

The postulates arising from the above notations can be stated as:

Postulate 8: All individuals have a self-image; and

Postulate 9: A concept of self is dynamic.

The diagram of Figure 1 depicts the concept of self as being manifest in five sub-sections of knowledge, role, motivation, value, and habitude. These five categories are extensively utilized in most self reports, however, they are not explicitly defined or stated as such. Each of these categories has been separately subjected to extensive investigation and as a result can be classified as conceptually existing. All individuals have attained and/or retained a certain capacity of knowledge; they exhibit certain roles of expected routine behavior; they are motivated to varying degrees and exhibit power in their striving to attain the goals they have set; they satisfy their needs according to some potential set of values; they exhibit an habitual temperament and individual style in their manner of behavior in social interaction. Further discussion on each of these topics provides the postulates that apply in each instance.

Knowledge System: This system involves the learning and thinking processes that are an integral function of human understanding. This system infers mental capacity—the information and insights that have become internalized by an individual through past experience. Psychological writings on the subject are legion.

Postulate 10: The self systematically assimilates and utilizes knowledge.

Role System: Every individual responds as a total entity, yet every individual does not respond in the same way to every situation. However, individuals do adopt expected routine behavior in specific instances. Variations of time, place, and condition not only affect our perceptions of ourselves and others' perceptions of us, but also affect the manner in which we behave in those circumstances. Keltner notes this and hypothesizes: "Each of us plays many roles as he goes about his business of living from day to day; and the wider the repertoire of honest roles a person has, the more effective he will be as a communicator."¹⁷

In the systemic self, the role system is meant to represent role learning, which includes "learning to behave, feel, and see the world in a manner similar to that of other persons who are in the same role category."¹⁸

A general postulate that pertains to this category is:

Postulate 11: The self is able to select from a system of learned roles.

Habitude System: Personality studies have noted that individuals adopt and adapt to a personal style of behavior that exhibit certain temperament and habit. The manner of approach that an individual uses in social interaction is normally consistent. A personal style of behavior reflects specific attributes that observers notice and react to in varying degrees. These subjective characteristics cause an observed individual to be evaluated in terms that can describe them as either adequate or inadequate. Combs *et al* describe the "adequate personality" in detail by devoting a chapter to this topic, plus a second to "the inadequate personality."¹⁹

A person in social interaction exhibits modal habitudes, which others observe and react to subjectively. An individual who is deemed honest, trustworthy, decisive, kind, and considerate would be approached in a different manner to one who is not.

The difficulty in defining this subsystem is in attempting to select terms that have not been rejected by personality theorists. This difficulty is noted by Cattell²⁰ in a discussion of personality traits.

Noting the difficulties in definition and the problems of terminology, the habitude subsystem of the systemic self can be envisaged as being more akin to temperament traits than it is to the ability traits suggested by personality theory. Nevertheless, an additional postulate of the systemic self can be stated as:

Postulate 12: The self in social interaction exhibits an individual style and temperament.

Motivation System: The motivation system of the systemic self model is a concept that identifies the formation of goals for self-actualization. This system then arranges the goals in a "queing" fashion that will allow the goals to be accessed in a prepotent fashion according to immediate relevant need.

Maslow proffers a theory that states that there are at least five sets of goals that can be viewed as basic needs. These he labels as "physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization", in addition to which, there is a desire to "achieve or maintain the various conditions upon which basic satisfactions rest and by more intellectual desires".²¹ These basic goals he feels are related to each other by being arranged in a hierarchy of prepotency.

The motivation system represented in this paper is most akin to that of Erb²² which in turn utilized aspects of Maslow's theory.²³ The drive to satisfy these goals provides the motive power for the associated behavior. Consequently, it is postulated that:

Postulate 13: The self has a system of motive power.

Value System: The value system represented in the model is an element which places a positive or negative quality on any relevant information that is to be synthesized, and converted to overt action by encoding process. Turner notes how this reaction is formulated, for he has written: "A value is a category of objects toward which an individual reacts in a positive or negative rather than a neutral fashion".²⁴ The intensity of action, either positively or negatively directed, does not depend upon this value system but rather on the driving power of the motivation system.

The value system is, like all of the other accumulator subsystems, also a processing device that internalizes values from a flexible trial and error method to a more permanent value structure. Our value system is directly linked to self-esteem and self-image mechanisms; it is not an entity unto itself. It is a learned process that changes from early childhood to one of stability and maturity. The value system, however, is always subject to change when new values are perceived.

Rosenberg would agree that the process of internalizing values comes about due to learning in a social environment. He points out that "many self-values are acquired long before the opportunity to test them adequately is at hand, and cannot easily be discarded".²⁵

The model of the systemic self attempts to portray the aspect, that goals and experiences are of value to the individual only as they contribute to the feeling of personal worth. Therefore, it is postulated:

Postulate 14: The self has a system of values.

The Overt Self

The overt self, like the perceiving and accumulated self, does not exist apart from other subsystems of the systemic self. It is a formulation of concepts that relate to the self as an actor. This category attempts to bring together the ideas that indicate how the self *synthesizes* retained and accumulated information and encodes this information in either a verbal and/or non-verbal response pattern.

Synthesization: All learning that is retained as "memory" is not required for every action an individual performs. Only selected bits of information are required for any specific action. These bits of accumulated information are scanned, selected, synthesized, and then subjected to a limiting or filtering effect by the defense mechanisms prior to being encoded for any behavioral response.

Selectivity: Rosenberg describes how psychological selectivity may operate to sustain self-esteem. He feels that there are "five types of selectivity that may influence self attitudes". These he lists as: "selectivity of values, of interpretation, of standards, of interpersonal relations, and of situations".²⁶

Keltner, in discussing "attention and selection", states: "Attention is the process of selecting those stimuli we will use to extract information. That is, it is the process whereby we process not only a portion of the information we receive and reject or ignore the rest".²⁷ The applicable postulate of selectivity is stated as:

Postulate 15: The self is capable of selective action.

Defense Mechanisms: The use of defense mechanisms is a normal human reaction. It is only when they are used to extreme that they interfere with the maintenance of the self-image rather than aiding it.

Hamachek discusses the mechanisms to defend the self and notes that: Whether we are always aware of it or not, each of us uses certain "defense" mechanisms to help us "preserve" or "protect" our self-systems. Indeed, our effectiveness in using certain defenses has a lot to do with how successful we are in meeting the daily stresses and strains of living. Although defense mechanisms are necessary, they can prove debilitating, if one uses them, however consciously or unconsciously, to avoid assuming responsibility, to abstain from taking risks now and then, or to manufacture excuses for persisting in behavior which may be immature and self-defeating.²⁸

Gibb, in discussing "defense communication," notes how an individual's "personal level of defensiveness" can affect communication and interpersonal relationships. He points out how individuals who behave overly defensively must "devote an appreciable portion of their energy to defending themselves".²⁹ This limiting and filtering effect is noted in the defense mechanism of the synthesizer. This statement postulated is:

Postulate 16: The self has a mechanism of defense.

Encodization: Thoughts remain internalized until the mechanics and the physical manoeuvring of the voice and body ensue. Encoding is a process that describes the conversion of thought into behavioral responses. These behavioral responses can be encoded as verbal and/or non-verbal. Keltner, in discussing the translation of a message into speech, notes the function of encode. He writes: "When you speak, you translate your thought-feeling into a system that permits you to transmit your message to others: you encode the message itself into the total language of speech".³⁰

Each voice produces unique wave patterns so that the characteristics associated with it can identify an individual. Keltner has also noted this characteristic by stating:

A person's voice is part of his self. The tone, the inflection, the feel and sound of its production are significant dimensions of the individual when viewed either from the inside by himself or from the outside by others.³¹

"It has been estimated that, in face-to-face communication, no more than 35 percent of the social meaning is carried in the verbal message".³² If this is so, then non-verbal encoding plays an important part in "overt action" for 65 percent of meaning must be encoded in this fashion. The encoder of the systemic self model attempts to represent all facets of verbal and non-verbal behavior.

Rueson in a study of non-verbal communication, has noted that an individual will encode meaning in a non-verbal language. This encoding of non-verbal communication he identifies as "sign, action and object language".³³

The self in social interaction displays both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication techniques. Therefore, it is postulated that:

Postulate 17: The self acts overtly in a verbal and/or non-verbal manner.

The Maintaining Self

No systemic self model would be complete without depicting the ways in which the self tends to a harmonious state of equilibrium in its association with itself and the environment. The maintenance sub-system of the systemic self attempts to provide a category for research studies that note how the self evaluates, modifies and maintains itself in a state of consonance. This common controller system provides for all of the feedback and interlinkages that are required to fully functionalize all other subsystems. Combs *et al* make special note of this process by stating: "The fundamental need of all human beings is the maintenance and enhancement of the phenomenal self".³⁴ Avila *et al* also agree with this type of maintenance function, and point out the "means of maintaining and enhancing the self".³⁵

Ossorio and Davis, in discussing "the consistency of the self" substantiate the overall and systematic features of the maintenance system.³⁶ Many writers attest to the inability to define what the systemic self's maintenance system has labelled as "consistency balance". One of these, Hamachek writes:

We commonly detect more consistency in our own and other people's behavior than we can always put our finger on and have the lurking suspicion that there is more overall consistency than that which meets the eye.³⁷

Another feature that is implied in the maintenance system is the "dissonance-harmony" function. Hamachek discusses this under a subheading "cognitive dissonance and the need for consistency". He notes that people solve their dissonant mental states, caused by inconsistent ideas and behaviors, by "either choosing one of the alternatives that face us or by trying to avoid or ignore the conflict".³⁸

Festinger's model of cognitive dissonance is probably the most descriptive of the "dissonance-harmony" function, inasmuch as the theory rests on the premise that a person continuously strives for consistency among his thoughts.

One of the most notable functions of the maintenance system is that of psychological protection. Undue stress or strain that an individual confronts is protected in order to prevent permanent damage to the individual's psychological make-up. This aspect is noted by Epstein when he writes:

It is essential for the functioning of the individual that the organization of the self-concept be maintained. When the organization of the self-concept is threatened, the individual experiences anxiety, and attempts to defend himself against the threat. If the defense is unsuccessful, stress mounts and is followed ultimately by total disorganization.³⁹

A dramatic example of this protective device was noted by Lifton (1966) when he studied the *Psychological Effects of the Atomic Bomb in Hiroshima*. He found that

Human beings are unable to remain open to emotional experience of this intensity for any length of time, and very quickly—sometimes within minutes—there began to occur what we may term “psychological closure”; that is, simply cease to feel.⁴⁰

The pertinent general postulates that apply to the maintenance system are listed below.

Postulate 18: The self strives for consistency in thought and action.

Postulate 19: The self tends toward a state of harmony.

Postulate 20: The fundamental function of all human beings is the maintenance and enhancement of the systemic self.

Conclusion

A Synthesized Self Theory Model

The previous discussion of the method adopted in extrapolating some of the basic postulates has yielded a diagram that attempts to represent the structure and function of special components of a self theory. The basic postulates provided by the review of the literature are by no means an exhaustive list. They were grouped to display five general categories of the self which, for the purpose of this paper are stated in reiteration as:

The Global Self: The postulates that related to the overall, general, and *systemic qualities of the self*.

The Perceiving Self: The postulates that pertain to the sensory mode through which an individual has access to the environment. This category emphasizes *the self as an observer*.

The Accumulated Self: The postulates that identify the collection of characteristics that an individual has accumulated over time. These accumulations display an image of the self at the present instant of observation. This category emphasizes *the identity of the self*.

The Overt Self: The postulates that note the ways in which an individual acts in a defended verbal and/or non-verbal manner. This category emphasizes *the self as an actor*.

The Maintaining Self: The postulates that represent the ways in which an individual consistently tends toward an *harmonious state*.

Figure 2, A Codification of a Self Theory, is a summation of previous discussion in conjunction with a provision of the associated processes. This important diagram of the systematic self model indicates the relationship of a few of the many postulates that form the basis of self theory.

Figure 2
A Codification of a Self Theory

SELF			
MODEL SUBSYSTEM	CONSTRUCT	POSTULATE	PROCESSES
GLOBAL SELF	SYSTEMIC	1. The self is systemic. 2. The self has a character which is different from that of the physiological organism proper. 3. The self germinates in the process of social experience and activity. 4. Language process is essential for the development of self.	SYSTEMS PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTAL COMMUNICATION
PERCEIVING SELF	PERCEPTION	5. The self observes the environment through physiological senses. 6. The self decodes sensory stimulation by selecting, organizing and interpreting the information into a meaningful and coherent picture. 7. The self uses adjustment mechanisms to control perceived information.	SENSORY OBSERVATION ADJUSTMENT
ACCUMULATED SELF	CUMULATION	8. All individuals have a self-image. 9. A concept of self is dynamic. 10. The self systematically assimilates and utilizes knowledge. 11. The self is able to select from a system of learned roles. 12. The self in social interaction exhibits an individual style and temperament. 13. The self has a system of motive power. 14. The self has a system of values.	IMAGE DYNAMIC KNOWLEDGE ROLE MOTIVATION VALUE HABITUDE
OVERT SELF	BEHAVIOR	15. The self is capable of selective action. 16. The self has a mechanism of defense. 17. The self acts overtly in a verbal and/or non-verbal manner.	SELECTION DEFENSE ENCODING
MAINTAINING SELF	MAINTENANCE	18. The self strives for consistency in thought and action. 19. The self tends towards a state of harmony. 20. The fundamental function of all human beings is the maintenance and enhancement of the systemic self.	CONSISTENCY HARMONY ENHANCEMENT

The Use of a Self Theory Model

One use to which a self theory model could be put is to try to provide a solution, no matter how rudimentary, to the problem as stated by Epstein (1973) when he queries:

From a behavioristic viewpoint, the self-concept has an aura of mysticism about it, appearing not far removed from the concept of soul. One can neither see a self-concept, nor touch it, and no one has succeeded as yet in adequately defining it as a hypothetical construct.⁴¹

The model in purview, in examining the theories of self, purports the ability to define self in hypothetical construct terms that are elementary and consistent with a baseline "Functional Theory" study. To validate the theory in a strict clinical laboratory manner to the satisfaction of even a sympathetic scientific behaviorist would be extremely difficult and quite beyond the scope of this paper. Spears (1971), concerned with validation procedures of self theory, has noted the difficulties involved in this regard.

The difficulty in validating SC Theory appears due, at least in part, to an inadequate logical analysis of the concept and to an incomplete if not inappropriate translation of the construct into methodology.⁴²

It is assumed that the model in purview is an adequate logical analysis of current research literature. It is further assumed that the proposed model can be used in a pragmatic test and evaluation manner as a result of the postulate and construct arrangement previously tabled.

This paper has noted the lack of a suitable self theory. In an attempt towards overcoming this inadequacy, a model was constructed by eclectic reference to current significant self studies. The model was structured in schematic fashion in order to exhibit the various properties that pertain to the "systemic self."

A basic codification of self theory has been attempted. The model's subsystems make not of the important facets of the self. These have been titled as global, perceiving, overt, maintaining, and accumulated. Most of the previous and current writings on the "self" can be subsumed under these subheadings. The rudimentary constructs that have been suggested in this investigation are: systematic, perception, cumulation, behavior, and maintenance. Under each of these constructs has emerged a number of postulates that support the formulation of a fundamental theory. Also contained in the codification of the proffered model, are the basic processes that relate to the postulates, constructs, and subsystems of the "self theory".

The authors concur with the opening Epstein⁴³ quotation of this paper and also submit "that self concept is a self theory". Their efforts have been directed towards initiating a start to the formalization of self theory.

Résumé

Construction Systématique d'un Modèle du Moi

Le but de cet article est d'élaborer un modèle de la théorie du moi qui illustre par des exemples les conceptions, les constructions et les idées que l'on trouve couramment dans la littérature au sujet du moi. Ce modèle est formulé par des références éclectiques aux recherches importantes et est présenté comme un diagramme schématique qui montre les constructions psychologiques et les postulats du moi. Notre but est d'entreprendre une approche systématique et générale de la théorie du moi.

Notes

¹S. Epstein, "The self-concept revisited", *American Psychologist*, May, 1973, p. 404

²D. Broadbent, *Perception and Communication*, (New York: Pergamon Press, Inc., 1958, p. 299).

³G. Vickers, *Making Institutions Work*, (London: Associated Business Programs, 1973).

⁴A. Strauss, *George Herbert Mead on Social Psychology*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969).

⁵A. W. Combs and D. Snygg, *Individual Behavior*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1959), p. 59.

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⁷Combs, p. 80.

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