## Lesson 1: Social, Environment & Other Life Factors (S.E.L.F)

Sustainable Development Goals:

SDG 3- Good Health & Well-Being

SDG 4- Quality Education

SDG 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities

SDG 17- Partnerships for the Goal

### Learning Objectives:

1. Determine the different factors that contribute to one's being;
2. Evaluate the impact of these factors through self appraisal, and
3. Synthesize the influence of the factors of the self through a group or even personal assessment.

### Learning Materials:

Objects, devices, tech gadgets, or real objects for content presentation or student activity

### Lesson Preview/Review

MCC Vision
Mabalacat City College envisions itself to be the top choice in the community it serves for quality education and training by 2025.

MCC Mission
The Mission of Mabalacat City College is to meet the needs of its community as a center for learning aiming for open admission policy.

### Overview

This module introduces the journey of understanding the self. It highlights the social, environmental, biological, and other life factors that contribute to the development of the self.

### Concept Notes/Teacher-Led Discussion

**An Overview of Self/Identity**

The self is a topic that is often talked about but largely goes unnoticed. Every time the "**I**" is mentioned (e.g., *I will go to school, I hang out with my friends, I like to eat burger)* the self is highlighted as the "act or." Further, the pronoun "me" is usually used as the object, (e.g., *tell me about it, give me something, it makes me feel awesome).* Noticeably, the self composes both the **I** as an actor and the **me** as the object. The focus on the self is even more evident in the functional word variations of *I* and *me* used in everyday language depending on purpose (e.g., my, mine, myself, etc.).

The consciousness of the existence of the self has been almost automatic of reflexive. Thus, people are almost unaware that in our everyday lives, we are constantly acknowledging it.

Scholars (i.e., theorist, scientist, philosophers) in different fields have attempted to explain and thoroughly expound on several issues and controversies about the nature, existence, and dimensionality of self. The most prevalent among issues on self are on *nature vs. nurture, identity vs. self,* and *dimensionality of the self.*

## Nature vs. Nurture

Some insist that the self is predominantly a product of natural processes to which people are inherently predisposed. The natural basis of the self is anchored on biology and explains that human traits are passed from one generation to another. These transmitted traits serve as a blueprint of the self and predisposes one to certain self-expressions (e.g., attitude, behavior, tendencies, etc.). In this stance, the self is studied structurally and functionally, from the molecular level to the entirety of human physiological systems. Genetics, for example, contribute so much information about description of the self. This field of biology primarily deals with heredity (transmission of traits and characteristics from one generation to another) as a process, as well as with the characterizations (similarities and differences) of organisms.

The other side, meanwhile, argues that the self should be principally viewed as an outcome of various nurturing factors in the context of one's life. Social sciences have provided a number of insights and explanations about the self, both on the micro and macro levels. Different social sciences stress how group life (formal and informal) affects an individual's behavior and attitude, ad emphasize on the impact of various social institutions to the self-construal of a person.

While the issue is about the predominance or either nature or nurture are still unresolved, one can safely assume that the self is a product of nature and nurture.

## Identity vs. Self

Self and identity are topics that remain popular not only among psychologists (even authors of psychology articles) but also among other social scientists like sociologists, cultural anthropologists, economist. Noticeable, the terms "self" and "identity" have been loosely interchanged in various literatures. Many people believe that there is a very thin conceptual and functional distinction between the two concepts and thus perceive them as synonymous.

Based on lexical definitions, the two concepts are distinct and can be delineated. Consider, for example, the definition provided in Merriam-Webster Dictionary of the term **identity** "the qualities, beliefs, etc., that make a particular person or group different from others... or the distinguishing character or personality of an individual." On the other hand, the term **self** (noun) refers to "the person that someone normally or truly is... or the entire person of an individual." The definitions provided suggest that the demarcation that separates the two fall on the social representation of the term (i.e., known to others, or only known to oneself). Identity distinguishes or compares one from another while the self refers to the total characteristics or qualities of a person both known and unknown to others (but known to oneself).

A comprehensive definition that underscores the distinctions and overlap between self and identity was given by Oyserman, Elmore, and Smith (2012, p. 69) stating that:

*Identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles, and social group membership that define who one is. Identities can be focused on the past- what used to be true of one, the present- what is true of one now, or the future- the person one expects or wishes to become, the person one feels obligated to try to become, or the person one fears variously described as what comes to mind when one thinks of oneself.*
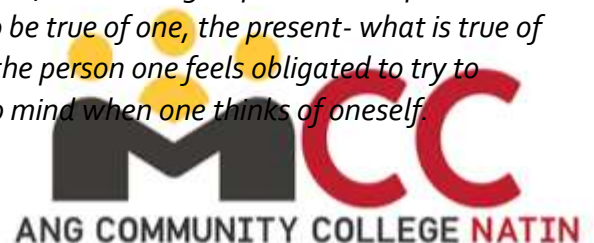
## Dimensionalities of the Self/Identity

The identity of a person is highlighted by a dominant trait which makes him or her distinguishable from others. Imagine, for example, a situation where you are trying to describe a person. You will find yourself thinking of remarkable traits that will make other people identify or even guess who you are talking about. You may start describing that person using physical attributes. However, this attempt may be unsuccessful because in many instances, the physical descriptions that you are giving can also be seen in other people unless the physical descriptions is so unique and specific to that person. In most cases, the identity of a person can be apart from others. Unfortunately, you will find it difficult to describe a person who belongs to the so-called "average" category. As the term implies, average connotes that one is just like everybody else in the group. In this case, several observable traits should be combined to effectively described the person (e.g., the tall and dark guy in the class who has a regional accent... and dressed up like...).

Developmental and social scientists have identified **social factor** as an agent of one's being. The social factor refers to the influences of significant people in one's life. It primarily includes the family in which most of the basic attitudinal and behavioral attributes of the individuals are shaped. It is referred to by many social scientists as the nursery of human nature. In this social group, an individual does not only acquire biological characteristics but also learn, both directly and indirectly, certain behaviors and characters. Thus, similarities in manners and attitudes are found in the members of a family. During the warning stage, or the stage in which the child slowly gains independence and withdraws from strong parental attachment, he or she starts identifying with other people outside of the family. At this time, the child associates with peers or playmates, referred to as the peer group., who will also eventually shape one's character. This stage can be critical for some children, especially if the values that they acquire challenge the foundation of behavioral characteristics that they initially learned from the family. As the child extends the horizon of his or her social connections, more and more characteristic are integrated. The process of building up one's identity becomes more complex and dynamic, but all these things happen unnoticeably and, in many instances, unconsciously. Social factors are strong foundations of one's being. The characteristics that were acquired from the influences of the social groups during the formative years are integrated to form one's identity, or uniqueness and similarities with others. Psychologists refer to this process of character and traits integration as the formation of personality. **Personality**, therefore, is the individual patterns of thinking, feelings, and behaving. It is said that no two people would have an identical personality, and that every individual is unique. One may share commonalities with other people but will still possess an identity that sets him or her apart. Consider, for example, a case of identical twins that were raised separately by different parents, educated from different schools, and grew up in different neighborhoods or communities. The twins may share several common characteristics because they were born out of a single zygote which carries their parent's DNA blueprints. The similarities may also go beyond physical characteristics and manifest in some manners and dispositions. Despite these similarities, the twins will still develop individual identities that make them distinct from one another. One may be assertive, and the other can be timid; or one is sociable or friendly while the other is aloof. Thus, identity does not connote exclusivity or outright difference against others; instead, it refers to the sets of characteristics that make one a distinct individual.

The extent to which social factors influence one's identity or being is inarguably encompassing. That is, the characteristics or significant others in a person's life can vitally impact his or her distinctiveness. These influential social groups shape one's identity through modelling, imitation, and traits integration. Meanwhile, a less obvious factor simultaneously affects one's being or character. It is the natural force called the **environmental factor.** Unlike the social factor, the environmental factor broadly includes the physical and communal elements present in everyday surroundings, and are invariably dealt with by individuals in a specific geographic region or area. The factor covers not only the physical properties of the surroundings but also the larger society or community, as well as the expectations and norms operating in that particular locality or place. For example, a person who grew up in a city where competitiveness and resiliency are

**ANG COMMUNITY COLLEGE NATIN**
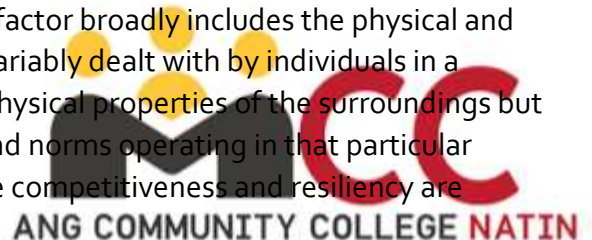
needed in order to survive would tend to adapt to that kind of environment by consciously strengthening certain traits and skills that will manifest competitiveness. In the process, the harnessed characteristics become an integral part of his or her identity.

Other factors also significantly contribute to one's identity or being, some of which already at the time of conception, like the **hereditary factor.** As discussed earlier, **heredity** is a biological process by which certain traits and characteristics are passed from one generation to another. Compared factors, heredity can be referred to as the non-negotiable factor. If one has the choice of whether or not to adopt the influence of social groups and to change or improve one's environment, heredity is relatively fixed and permanent. It readily dictates one's physical attributes, some cognitive traits, and some other personal characteristics upon birth. This factor will be thoroughly discussed in the succeeding module.

Of all the factors of identity, the most controversial perhaps is the **person-volition factor.** It refers to the inclination of a person to form and construct a specific identity that will set him apart from others. Such factor emanates from within the mentality of an individual, brought about by the aggregated social-life experiences. Social scientist like sociologists may refer to a person exhibiting person-violation factor as deviant or non-conformist. Being one is not necessarily negative; in fact, some of the people of this type become trend setters, revolutionaries, discoverers, and inventors.

As explained in this section, identity is a product of a complex process of combinations and integration of traits and characteristics from various and voluntarily while others are obtained unconsciously and involuntarily.

Now, try to test your awareness of your own identity.

## References

Macayan, J.V., Pinugu, J.N., Castillo, J.C. & Ofalia, B. (2019). Understanding the Self (Outcome-Based Module). C & E Publishing, Inc. 839 EDSA, South Triangle, Quezon City. ISBN: 978-971-98-1071-1CE.

Corpuz, R. M, Estoque, R. S. &Tabotabo, C. V. (2019). Understanding the Self. C & E Publishing, Inc. 839 EDSA, South Triangle, Quezon City. ISBN: 978-971-98-1184-8.

Corpuz, B. B., Lucas, M. D., Borabo, H. L. &Lucido, P. I. (2015). Child and Adolescent Development: Looking at Learners at Different Life Stages. Lorimar Publishing Incorporated, Quezon City. ISBN 971-685-721-4.

Estrada, A. T. (2011). Developmental Characteristics Of Young Children. REX Bookstore Inc. (RBSI), First Edition, Sampaloc, Manila. ISBN 978-971-23-5917-0.

Milagros, F. F. , Mores, E. T. &Mogol, M. A. (2009). General Psychology Simplified. Books Atbp. Publishing Corporation, Mandaluyong City. ISBN 971-0388-63-9.

Prepared by:

Edmon Y. Sampana, LPT, PhD
*Instructor*

Reviewed by:

April Ann L. Galang, LPT
PH/FIC

Approved by:

Glen S. Nolasco, LPT, MSc
Dean

Cf:

Marilyn S. Arcilla, RN, LPT, MAN
OIC-VPAA