

The opinions your family, friends, and peers have of you is an elusive subject; we often spend our lives not knowing what the people around us actually think of our personality and our choices. Some might say that it is narcissistic or self-important to pursue such knowledge. However, doing so in a systematic and scientific way can tell us much about what types of conclusions individuals draw about others and in what types of contexts they come to them. By analyzing the results from a survey given to my own family and friends, I hope to make some inferences concerning the basis by which they draw conclusions about me and how those conclusions may be different or the same as my own self-image. Alongside the analysis, however, will be notes on ways I could further test some of the hypotheses I have made based on my friends' and family's answers.

Overall, there was a lot of agreement between my answers and the scores I received from my family and friends. Among scores there was the most agreement between myself and others in terms of my intelligence (very high), leadership potential (high), narcissism (low), fashion savviness (high), ticklishness (high), religiousness (low), and capacity for sympathy (high). Of these, intelligence and leadership potential surprised me the least. Many of the people who filled out this quiz are in a club that I am currently the president of so scoring highly in leadership potential was not unexpected. In terms of intelligence, while I scored myself as a 3.00, more than half of the answers I received were 4.00. I am usually noted as being very well-spoken which gives people the impression that I am more intelligent than I think I am.

Scoring highly in fashion savviness was the most surprising among these to me. While I think I dress well, I would not say that I follow trends. In fact, I disagree with buying popular brands or items simply just because they are in fashion, though I do not actively avoid them. Despite this opinion, I only received one 2.00 in that area with the rest being either 3.00 or 4.00.

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This occurrence could be attributed to associating with a peer group whom also share my opinions in regards to fashion. However, in the zero-acquaintance survey we took, I scored a 3.00 among strangers. Perhaps I follow trends more closely than I think I do, or my fashion choices just align with fashion norms in a subculture. If I were to give this survey to people with differing interests outside my friend group, I think the scores I would receive would vary more.

While I agreed with the majority of the scores my family and friends gave me, there were a few that I disagreed with heavily. Of them, the one I disagreed with most was in my musical prowess. I rated myself at a 3.00 in being a musician, though in my quiz I worded it as being “musically inclined.” I was a member of the guitar ensemble in my high school for two years and frequent live musical performances at least twice a month. Despite this, the average score I received was a 2.48 with an average score of 1.50 from just my family members. Considering the above information about myself, this score absolutely baffles me. Perhaps I could do this quiz again, but have my friends distinguish themselves as those I met in high school and those I met in college. I would expect that the scores from my friends from high school would be higher than those in college since they knew me when I was still heavily involved in making music myself.

The opinions of my friends and my family diverged from one another respectively on only a couple points, the first concerning my being a sensation-seeking individual. The mean among my friends was a 2.83 whereas the mean among my family was a 2.00. I found this point amusing because among my friends, I known for being fairly adventurous with my choices (open to trying new foods, the first to recommend a new spot to hang out, etc.). With my family, however, I am by far the least adventurous; they typically pick very dangerous activities for vacations such as skydiving or hiking in extremely remote areas.

My family and friends also do not agree on how easily I am to upset. The average among my friends was a 2.21 while the average from my family members was 3.50. Like the last point, part of this disagreement can be attributed to a difference between how easily upset my family is in contrast with my friends. However, another aspect of this might have been recent events in my life. A sizable portion of those who took this quiz were people I had met within the last year, and during that time period I dealt with a string of emotionally stressful events. The friends that met me in that time frame formed most of their opinions of me in that context, thus their view of me in this respect may vary from that of my family. In contrast, I am seen as more emotionally stable and less temperamental than most of my family. To test if my hypothesis about my friends' opinion is correct, I could give out this survey again in one year after they have made more memories with and opinions about me sans a stressful context and see if their scores differ.

Overall, I found it incredibly interesting to have this level of insight into the opinions that my loved ones have of me. While some of my findings were not out of the ordinary, some were very surprising. One lesson that I took from analyzing my survey results is that you should not always assume that people see you the way that you see yourself, even if there are qualities you find very self-evident. Another was that the context that people view you in heavily affects the kinds of opinions they hold about you; even if you know that you are only acting in a particular way because of a specific context or event, others do not know that fact and will assume that your actions are due to your personality. I think that modifying and adding questions to my survey could lead to some fascinating findings. I think it would be interesting to add questions specifically about how good of a gamer they think I am. I would expect that friends from high school would rate me higher than friends I have made in college, considering I am at a more even level with a majority of my college friends in terms of skill. I should not assume this,

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however, seeing as I also thought I would be rated highly in musical talent. I will have to keep this in mind when one of my friends sends me a survey about themselves.