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Interpersonal Film Paper

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We all have had a hard time growing up whether it was searching for our true identity, being scared to self disclose, or our own self concept of ourselves. But it was up to us to make sure our identity management was intact and we knew who we were. Catch Me If You Can answered all my questions of the true definition of self and what you make it to be. I had a hard time choosing what movie I should pick; how the plot would coincide with this paper and what I planned to talk about. This movie is based on self-deceit, self concept and identity management. It focuses on how Frank is able to manage all three of these components while also impersonating different roles.

I wanted to pick a movie where Leonardo DiCaprio was the main character simply because his relationships with people in movies is very definitive on the plot of the movie. Catch Me If You Can is a movie that was released in 2002; it is based on a true story. Leonardo DiCaprio plays “Frank Abagnale Jr.” who was employed as a doctor, lawyer, and co-pilot but this was all apart of his plan of deception. He plays a successful con artist and a master at deception and lies. Frank was also a check forger, he stole millions of dollars from banks through bank fraud. The FBI then got involved but little did they know that Frank was always a step ahead which allowed the FBI to continue the chase. Frank was apart of a family that was falling apart because of deception, and his father's debt.In order to get what he wanted he use to compliment women, give them gifts and treats them with the utmost respect because he knows they aren't treated like that on a daily basis. Franks self concept of himself was always switching because he is always switching personalities, and what he does. The more he does this, the more he loses his sense of self. He doesn't really know who he is because he keeps switching hobbies and job descriptions. Frank Abagnale refuses to self disclose his real identity, which makes him keep his girlfriends at arms length. Carl (FBI agent) figures out Franks real identity which is a lonely young man, filled with anger and memories of his childhood. He started deception when he was a teen at the age of 16. Catch me if you can, shows the dilemma, reward and consequences of deception and self disclosure in interpersonal and personal relationships. Catch me if you can illustrate to the viewers that money can't buy love; can't maintain your self concept of yourself. This movie contains at least 4 interpersonal communication styles, one being verbal. Verbally, Frank was able to get what he wanted by his poise, smile and the way he spoke to the women at the bank. Non-verbally, he would come to the banks dressed as a co-pilot and they would give him the money from the forged check. He also claimed to be a doctor, in which people viewed him highly as he passed by because of his professional status. Self disclosure was also used in this movie plenty of times because of the way he would tell people about his life; although it was all a deception, people wouldn't know unless they personally knew him. Disclosure abled Frank to gain intimacy with many of the women he met. The Uncertainty Reduction Theories was used in this movie between Carl and Frank, when Carl hired Frank to work at the bank he was always uncertain because he didn't know if Frank would show up or not. “The beginning of personal relationships are fraught with uncertainties”(Oregon State,Interpersonal Communication Theories and Concepts: Social Penetration Theory, Self-Disclosure, Uncertainty Reduction Theory, and Relational Dialectics Theory). This is very true because we don't know how a person acts until we truly know who they are internally and externally.Relational Dialectics Theory is also used because the relationship between frank and his mother, reflect tensions that he had with her in the past because she cheated on his father. Frank was able to use the “Listening” concept in his communication when he was speaking with ladies who were interested in him. They loved a man who could Listen to them because they were not normally used to being around that. The idea of an interpersonal relationship means the process of making meaning from what we experience in our relationships with people. There were many controversial parts in this movie. Frank had no sense of self because he kept switching identities. Usually, they do a two factor authentication at banks especially when you hand in a check to receive cash. They should've done that when he was forging checks. The main character “Frank” used his interpersonal identity management skills to switch identities, and hobbies in order to participate in fraudulent activities. Frank was a con, a great one; he received millions of dollars because he was great at being a con artist but he had trouble identifying his true self. Towards the middle of the movie, the plot focuses on the chase between Frank and the FBI agent, Carl. Throughout this movie it was evident that Identity management was the most frequent interpersonal communication skill used. Identity management theory refers to how we handle ourselves in different situations in life. As stated above, he uses nonverbal communication such as his tone and pitch when he talks to women. Frank started commuting fraud after he was running out of money. He used his interpersonal skills to play the role of a pilot, doctor, and a lawyer. There were a couple concepts I found very enlightening, such as Frank getting caught by FBI agent Carl, but he posed to be an FBI agent as well so he wouldn't get caught. Frank knew how to manage his identities when he was playing different roles. “Although identity/impression management is a feature of competent communication, Frank crosses the line from other-oriented appropriateness to self-serving deceit.” (Global,2009). This is letting the reader know that the more Frank would impersonate and take on different roles he was also losing his sense of self in the process.

In conclusion, self concept is an important part of our everyday lives. We must know ourselves because if we don't then we don't have a sense of identity management. Our identity management is what's used when we are in different scenes or times in our lives and how we act. Whether it's our true self or an impersonation of how we want to be viewed by others. Although, Frank had money, and everything he ever wanted he still wasn't satisfied because he felt like he wasn't loved by his mother; his father's passing as well. It is highly important to make sure that you know yourself and how you communicate with others before stepping out in the real world. Communication is key; verbal or non verbal. So is your self-concept.

**References**

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