

In elementary school, students are asked what they want to be when they grow up. Most of the time the responses given are far different than what they end up deciding to do as they grow older. As a person develops their sense of self, a bunch of different things start to play a part. In “The Self, the I, and the Me”, George Mead explains what is considered the two parts of yourself that make up who you are. Similarly, the idea of the self and its selves was introduced by William James, and it allows people to analyze themselves in more detail through what was called the material self, the social self, personal identity, and pure ego.

The material self is what allows a person to physically show others different parts of themselves. Over time the material self grows, and a personal identity is formed. William James’ theory about the personal identity is basically the same as what George Mead calls the “Me” in “The Self, The I, and The Me”. The “I” is the first thing that comes to mind for a person in a given situation while, the “Me” is the emotional response to the given stimuli. The “Me” learns and evolves through both nature and nurture in different social settings allowing each person’s “Me” to be a unique representation of themselves. Despite all this, a person’s social self is how a person is seen within different social spheres, so despite what a person may think of themselves, in one social sphere they could be a completely different kind of person than they are in a different social sphere. A good example of this would be a person’s identity at work versus their identity around their close friends or family.

Furthermore, everyone’s sense of self develops differently within their brain and develops into their soul or what William James referred to as the pure ego. Some people are just wired differently and finding out why a person is different from another, all stems back to how and why the almost endless versions of yourself came to be. The only thing to consider now is which versions of yourself are the ones you want others to see, and which ones you will keep hidden forever.