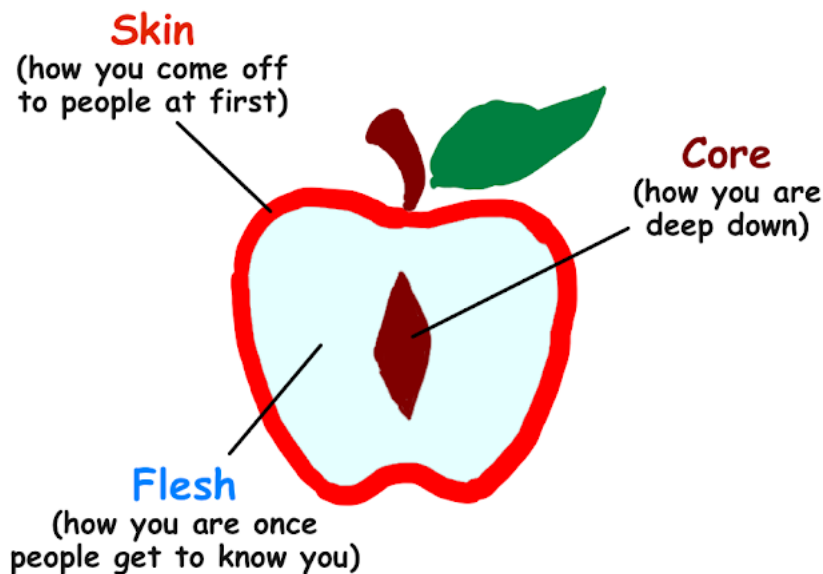



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## The Apple Game: How Good a Person Are You?

📅 August 30, 2013 By Tim Urban

I'd like to introduce you to a game I've been playing with friends for years. It's not a game really—more of an exercise. The purpose is to add a bit more depth to the question, "Are you a good person?" Here's how it's played: Treat a person like an apple, with three layers of depth—



The idea is to label a person simply as either "good" or "bad" on each of these layers to create an "apple profile"—a quick sizing up of their goodness through and through. More about the three layers:

### Layer 1) The Apple Skin

**Definition:** How you come off at first

**Who Knows Your Skin:** Everyone who comes into contact with you, from a cashier you buy something from (that's the outermost surface) to a coworker you've never really gotten to know (further inwards but still considered the skin).

**Questions to Ask to Know Whether Your Skin Is Good or Bad:**

- Do people tend to like you and feel comfortable around you when they first meet you?
- Do people who barely know you think you're a nice person?
- Would people describe you as "friendly"?
- Are you pleasant in public?

**5.9k** Shares

Most of these answers are YES, your skin is Good. If not, your skin is Bad.



### Layer 2) The Apple Flesh

**Definition:** How you are once people get to know you

**Who Knows Your Flesh:** Friends, family, significant others, and other people in your life who have gotten to know you pretty well.

**Questions to Ask to Know Whether Your Flesh Is Good or Bad:**

- Do you often talk about people behind their back very differently than you'd talk about them to their face?
- If someone says something bad about someone you care about when the person is not there, do you often stay quiet (as opposed to vocally standing up for the person)?
- Would people who know you well say you can be pretty petty sometimes?
- Would people who know you well say you can be pretty judgmental sometimes?
- Do you often feel schadenfreude when something goes badly for someone you know?
- When you're at a one-on-one dinner with someone you know well, would you feel comfortable talking about yourself for much more than 50% of the time?
- Are you less-than-great at keeping secrets?
- Do you sometimes exaggerate or lie about facts when you recount stories from your life?
- Are you bad at returning things you borrow or paying people back quickly?

**If the majority of these answers are NO, your flesh is Good. If not, your flesh is Bad.**

## Layer 3) The Apple Core

**Definition:** How you are deep down

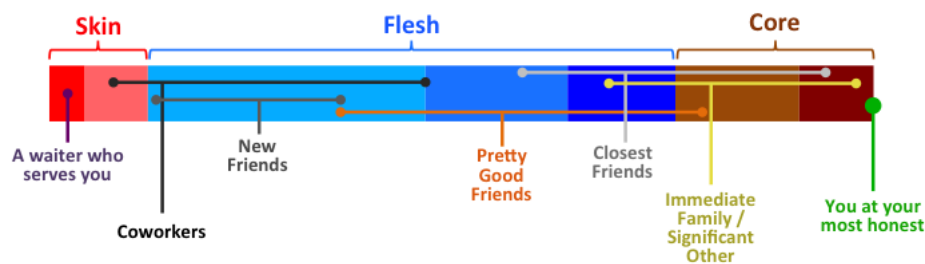
**Who Knows Your Core:** For some people, their closest friends, family, or significant other. For others, only the person himself knows what his own core is like.

**Questions to Ask to Know Whether Your Core Is Good or Bad:**

- Picture a button that, if pressed, would make 1,000 strangers across the planet drop dead instantly and also make a career dream of yours come true or lead you to true love. No one would ever know that you pressed the button if you do. You're given exactly one hour in front of the button to think about the decision. At the end of the hour, would you press it?
- Are you ever cruel just because it feels good to be?
- Are you meanest to the weakest people you know?
- Do you rarely feel any real empathy for those you care about in their times of misfortune?
- Do you typically make your friends and family members feel worse about themselves when you spend time with them?
- Would the people closest to you agree with the statement about you, "Deep down, she really only cares about herself." Would you agree with that statement about yourself?

**If most of these answers are NO, your core is good. If not, your core is bad.**

Here's a breakdown of the range of depth various people in your life probably know you:



The ranges aren't just because various people in the same categories know you to various levels of depth, but because some people are more open and "let people in" more than others. So Tommy's "pretty good friends" might know him better than Jenny's closest friends know her, because Tommy is more open with friends than Jenny is.

Anyway, the end result here is eight possible apple profiles. To come up with your or someone else's apple profile, you simply need to label them with either good or bad for all three layers and say them in order (skin, then flesh, then core). So someone who has a good skin, bad flesh, and good core would be a GOOD-BAD-GOOD.

Let's discuss each of the profiles:

## 1) GOOD-GOOD-GOOD

**Their Deal:** Saints through and through; everyone else other than BAD-GOOD-GOODs makes them a bit uncomfortable; they totally underestimate how bad bad people actually are.

**Why They're Great:** The world needs some people like this to hold everything together; they're intensely trustworthy.

**Why They're Shitty:** They have potential to suck the fun out of the room; they disapprove of a lot of things.

## 2) BAD-GOOD-GOOD

**Their Deal:** They turn new people off only to be revealed as positively wonderful when you get to know them. GOOD-GOOD-GOODs like to make a token BAD-GOOD-GOOD friend to keep people on their toes.

**Why They're Great:** They're utterly solid; they detest both phoniness and pettiness; people tend to respect them; they make great leaders.

**Why They're Shitty:** Their ego might be slightly too thrilled with its little "standoffish yet wonderful" thing.

## 3) GOOD-BAD-GOOD

**Their Deal:** Their friends chuckle when new people talk about how *nice* they are; they tend to be friends with a lot of other GOOD-BAD-GOODs; they often feel like they're worse people than they actually are.

**Why They're Great:** Usually fun and often funny; great social skills.

**Why They're Shitty:** They can be both phony and petty, but nothing too dire.

## 4) BAD-BAD-GOOD

**Their Deal:** They intimidate a lot of people and turn off others, but their friends think they're the best and fiercely defend them. Most of their friends are other BAD-BAD-GOODs with some GOOD-BAD-GOODs and some BAD-BAD-BADs sprinkled in.

**Why They're Great:** They're kind of a dick but at least they're a kind-hearted dick.

**Why They're Shitty:** They're kind of a dick.

## 5) GOOD-GOOD-BAD

**Their Deal:** Dangerous people; they win a lot of people over and end up hurting a lot of people; they make friends with GOOD-GOOD-GOODs, and then have nasty falling outs with them.

**Why They're Great:** As far as Bad Core people go, they're at least making the world a better place a lot of the time; strong profile for political success.

**Why They're Shitty:** The people they do harm are the ones closest to them; they're highly manipulative.

## 6) BAD-GOOD-BAD

**Their Deal:** This is a weird and rare profile, and usually happens when a not-so-great person is carefully crafting their persona; they're often delusional, thinking of themselves as a BAD-GOOD-GOOD ("People think I'm a dick but people who know me know I'm a great person") and denying all ties to their bad core; they break a lot of hearts.

**Why They're Great:** Good profile for success in a cutthroat industry (their bad skin can provide the proper intimidation, their good flesh can build a large trusting network, and their bad core can focus singlehandedly on personal advancement at all costs and fuck people over when necessary).

**Why They're Shitty:** They're pretty shitty people.

## 7) GOOD-BAD-BAD

**Their Deal:** Everyone's fun friend who turns out to also just kind of be a huge asshole. Lots of falling outs with GOOD-BAD-GOOD friends after hitting it off beautifully.

**Why They're Great:** Amazing as a Real Housewives cast member.

**Why They're Shitty:** Biggest phonies of the bunch.

## 8) BAD-BAD-BAD


**Their Deal:** Just a good old fashion bad person. Sometimes friends will try to spin the narrative that their BAD-BAD-BAD friend is really a BAD-BAD-GOOD, but no one really believes it. They don't really understand people with Good Cores but detest both GOOD-GOOD-BADs and BAD-GOOD-BADs for both thinking and trying to project to the world that they're better than BAD-BAD-BADs—BBBs see right through it.

**Why They're Great:** They're neither phony nor delusional; often make great standup comedians; great mafia profile.


**Why They're Shitty:** Do you really have to ask why they're shitty?





 **fernandinands** → fernandinands • 5 months ago  
But to be honest i wanted to be better than i am.  
^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **Enrico Marocco** • 6 months ago  
Here's an interactive version of "The Apple Game" test: <https://emarock.github.io/a...>  
It's on GitHub: Pull Requests are welcome!  
^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **fernandinands** → Enrico Marocco • 5 months ago  
Kinda 100% good, 60% bad, then 80% good.  
^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **LeftistGladiator499** • 7 months ago  
I'm roughly 90% certain I'm a BGG.  
I would press the button, immediately regret doing so and hate myself for it for a long time.  
2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

 **Saud** • 7 months ago  
Bad-Bad-Good = Rick from Rick and Morty?  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

 **anonymous** • 7 months ago  
Good-Good-Bad here. In high school, I would have been a GBB so... progress?  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **H** • 9 months ago  
Really fun way of classifying people. I've sometimes done a similar thing with different levels of happiness/positivity and sadness/negativity.  
  
A thoroughbred GGG here, apparently. For every question, except that I'm terrible at giving back borrowed stuff and I often don't feel empathy. The fact that I came out as a GGG kinda makes me sick - I hate GGGs. And sometimes I do hate myself for being so Good. Doing this has made me realise that though I do all of the Good Skin things, I kind of detest doing them. Think I might truly be a kind of BGG, and perhaps it would be fun to try going along with that and being a bit more abrasive - luckily the skin is the easiest layer to change.  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **anonymous** • 9 months ago  
I'm certainly a GGG, zero doubt about that.  
  
I just spent the last hour profiling everyone I know and got to some very interesting conclusions about my life - that's a lot tim!  
  
Also noticed that interestingly it really runs in the family. Some families got like an all GGGs more or less, and some family got several BGB or GGB or so..  
It also really runs well in friend groups, as I said I'm a GGG and all 3 of my good friends are GGG too  
  
Game of thrones:  
John snow: GGG  
Daeneries: GGG  
tyrion: GGG  
Tywin: B,B,neutral  
little finger: GGB  
sansa: GGG  
ramsay: BBB  
joffery: BBB  
arya: GGG (kinda)  
the hound: BBG  
varys: G,G,nobody fucking knows  
dragons: B,B,neutral  
^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **fernandinands** → anonymous • 5 months ago  
Or DragonBall profiles:  
  
Goku, Gohan, Son Gohan, Goten, Videl, Future Trunks, KamiSama, Krilin, Shin, Majin Boo and the Dog, Zeno, Android 8 and 16, Chaos, Cabba, Turtle, and the King: GGG;  
Whis: GG, Mystery  
Caulifla, Tenshinhan and Piccolo: BGG;  
Bulma, Chichi, Yamcha, Kame, Puar and Oolong, Hercule, 17 and 18: GBG;  
Vegeta, Hit, Beerus, Jiren: BBG;  
  
Maron(Krilin first GF), Zamasu: GGB;  
Rich Guys: BGB  
Frost: GBB  
Freeza, Piccolo Daimaoh, Tao Pai Pai: BBB  
Cell and Majin Boo: BB, Maniac.  
^ | v • Reply • Share ›


 **anonymous** → anonymous • 9 months ago  
tywin&dragons are BBB on second thought..  
^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **anonymous** → anonymous • 7 months ago  
Tywin is a BBG, I think.  
^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **KiL** • 10 months ago  
I'm Bad-Good-Bad and you just called me a delusional not-so-great-person. Could've been worse I can live with that. On a side note, these are some pretty interesting ideas you showed..colour me impressed; liked the article ofc.  
^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **Jamie Moffat** • 10 months ago  
Solid thumbs up on this post. Great food for thought when evaluating your self and others, and the self you want to be.  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **Nathy F.** • a year ago  
I think I'm a Good-Bad-Good for sure. Sending this to my friends now. Let's see what they think.  
3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **Honora Renwick** → Nathy F. • 6 months ago  
Ditto.  
^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **inspireants** • a year ago  
Feeling a little banana today ...  
3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **logs** → inspireants • 9 months ago  
same  
good comment  
2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **be\_gratefull** • a year ago  
Lasting happiness stems from gratitude for one's life. If I felt capable of taking a thousand lives for some possibly impermanent realization of a dream, I'd take a hard look at how happiness is generated in my life and why I am so unhappy with my current lot.  
2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >


 **Anonymous** • a year ago  
Bad-Good-Good. I'm initially openly hostile/dismissive towards people I don't know because I don't tolerate any one with bad in the flesh or core. I assume there is a bad until proven otherwise.  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

 **Anonymous** • 2 years ago  
I'm a terrible person. Wow, thank you, Tim, for helping me realize that. :(  
7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

 **esperantokid** • 2 years ago  
TBH I'm a NNN (the test says I'm GGB but I'm really more BBG so I guess NNN)  
^ | v • Reply • Share >

 **GGN** • 2 years ago  
How dare you make the last and most important section have an EVEN NUMBER OF QUESTIONS! What does good-good-neutral even meaaaaan?  
  
(Apparently someone who's desperately hoping sarcastic screaming comes across on the internet...)  
  
I thought each layer was just going to be the general feeling you got from those questions but then OP said to count them up and now I'll never knowww...  
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

 **Andre** • 2 years ago  
Layers 1 and 2 have an odd number of questions, but Layer 3 has an even number of questions, making possible a tie between Yes and No answers.  
^ | v • Reply • Share >

 **sabs546** • 2 years ago  
Someone's gotta remake this with a neutral  
I retook the test after a few years, I was GGG before, I'm still GGG (I think even moreso than before) the description is very accurate

On the skin I had only yes aside from the first question, I'm not sure, I do tend to be awkward and quiet around new people but I try my best (basically not for me to judge)

In the flesh I had 2 yeses, I do feel schadenfreude if they deserve it, I get annoyed if the things not bad enough and sad if it's too far, and yes I exaggerate my stories, but only to make them more entertaining, otherwise nah I don't like to make big deals outta stuff and it depends on the story, situation and who I'm telling

In the core, it's all no, and the button thing?

I wouldn't even think about it

It takes 2 seconds of reading that to notice that you have no idea who you kill, and if you do kill someone who does deserve it (in your opinion atleast) who would you be to decide if they live or die, also you would be no better than the murderers who at that point, its pressing the button for a selfish reason too, 1000 people is more likely to be better than humanity than 1 person

That's about it, also I used to say yes to the cruelty for cruelties sake but I only actually did that once for a spider and I don't feel too good about it, I guess these past few years have changed me

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Jason Walden** • 2 years ago

Bad-Good-Bad. But does me admitting that I am that profile disqualify me from BEING that profile?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**James Michaels** • 2 years ago

I thought this was a fascinating article. My first thought was that I was a GOOD-BAD-GOOD but amongst my friends I am notorious for giving off bad first impressions and being standoffish with new people, suggesting unpleasantly that I was more of a BAD-BAD-GOOD.

Though I know this is probably not going to be of much interest to anyone but myself, I'd like to give a comprehensive breakdown.

I am very courteous to waiters, shop clerks and service people in general. I am even courteous to telesales people if I am forced to call them (not if it's an unsolicited incoming call- fuck those guys, right?) I am always fully aware that it's not their fault their company made a mistake or if I've had to wait on hold for ages, and shouting at them and being rude is going to get me precisely nowhere. I don't want to get off the phone feeling like an asshat.

Most of the reason for this courteousness is that there is no reason to behave any other way, even if it's under trying circumstances. These interactions are simple, specific, clearly mapped out and usually short. You're most likely never going to see them again; this would, I gather, often be an excuse to be ruder than usual for many people, but I don't see it that way at all. I genuinely believe the old adage that manners cost nothing, and I have a great respect for people who work crappy low-level jobs. I've been there myself, and they could have simply gone on unemployment and not a handout, but chose not to

[see more](#)

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Zack Light** • 2 years ago

The problem I'm having is that, when you answer the questions, most people do it based on how they feel in the moment. I think I'm not mean to the weakest people I know, but I've never done an analysis of all the times I've interacted with weak people and how they feel about me. In this way people's analyses of themselves probably won't be super accurate.

The thing is, that's okay. The point is to try and make people reflect on themselves, and many will certainly change their self image and realize that they could be a better person.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Zack Light** ➔ Zack Light • 2 years ago

I'm to quiet in public to answer any of the question about the skin and most of the flesh questions.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**J** • 2 years ago

WTF??? Who are all these \_\_ B commenters who are SAYING THEY WOULD PUSH THE BUTTON??? If you would kill 1000 people for personal gain you are a PSYCHO. GO GET HELP. If you are are a person who would NOT push the button, go through the comments here and look at the percentage of people who have said they WOULD push it. Leaving this post feeling awful about the world.

9 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Anonymous** ➔ J • a year ago

Well its called "BAD" for a reason lol. A person with a Bad core is what most people refer to as an evil person. People with a bad skin are rude, people with bad flesh are assholes., people with a bad core are evil.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Inquisitive Mouse** ➔ J • 2 years ago

What if the 1000 are all in nursing homes praying for God to take them? Can I pick and choose? I assumed that it would be a random cross section of people, so not pressing the button. Also I am married to my true love, and about to retire, so not much incentive.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**Stia** ➔ J • 2 years ago

Lots of people like to see themselves as more machiavellian than they really are if push came to shove.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**KV** • 2 years ago

Also, just fell into the labyrinth of reading these comments and it is beyond depressing!

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**KV** • 2 years ago

Tim, which one are you? Do you think it's something innate, or can people shift across the spectrum (w/ the core/flesh)?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Jared** • 2 years ago

This was hilariously accurate - GBG and pretty much all my closest friends are too - I get on well with GGGs I think and often can be friends but we never end up overly close because they sometimes bore me and I can be too superficial for them I think. I think with GBGs we tend to be loyal and trust each other and get the core but it's our GGG kinda outer layer friends that get the short end of the stick with the flesh some of the time. We do like them we just can't help gossiping 😊

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**guest** • 2 years ago

I've realised that I'm a bad person and I'm crying now.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**guest** • 3 years ago

I see a link between this article and "Religion for the Non-religious"  
If the core is bad then it means that you are in the fog because you believe in the whole "dog eats dog", me vs them thing , just look at the paragraph "Our lives in the fog": "It's why we're self-absorbed and narcissistic; vain and greedy; narrow-minded and judgmental; cold, callous, and even cruel." doesn't that describe well a person who's deep down evil? Or someone who would really choose the 1000 deaths for a good career option? Also, I think that bad flesh and skin still means being in the fog but to a much lesser degree.

I'm a GGG, and I ignore insignificant things like power ,wealth, career or society's expectations. They can't make me sway from the path of my morals for I deeply believe that what comes first are not material things but humanity itself.

And if I'm the only one to truly believe in this, I don't care, I will still pursue my values to my grave and beyond.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**itsamemario** • 3 years ago

I'm a GGB but I won't tell you, hehe...

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**blacksheepboybucky** • 3 years ago

Here's a fun question, which fictional characters are described by each category?

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**ericsp23** • 3 years ago

I got Bad, Good, Good, but my skin was only one question away from good and my flesh was only one question away from bad. My core was pretty good; I only answered yes to the first question (I initially said no, but after thinking about it for a bit I had to be honest with myself and say I would probably press the button). I think Neutral, Neutral, Good would be a better characterization of my "apple".

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**BBB** • 3 years ago

I guess I'm Bad Bad Bad if I go by the black and white thinking in this post, but I think in reality I'm probably just neutral, neutral, neutral. And killing 1000 people to accomplish your goals doesn't seem THAT bad to me, it's an easily understandable decision.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Handsome Jack** • 4 years ago

BGB. Kill 1000 strangers to accomplish my goals? I'd press it instantly, no hesitation.

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Anonymous** ➔ Handsome Jack • a year ago

What if my goal is to save 1001 people?

^ | v • Reply • Share >



**Jack** ➔ Handsome Jack • 3 years ago

I'd do that too, handsome version of myself.

14 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



**KV** ➔ Jack • 2 years ago

Would you really not care? What if you were forced to watch the life stories of a random 3 of them after you killed them, would it make a difference?

I don't believe you'd actually do it.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >





Anna → KV • 2 years ago

I know I would. It may seem hard to believe but some people really don't give a fuck. I personally would push the button, then watch the life of a random 3 as though it was a very long movie, then get on with my life and enjoy my personal gain.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



one plus one is two → Anna • 2 years ago

I'd enjoy watching you struggle with pain and guilt if your S.O./children/parents were among those 1,000 people you chose to kill.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



KV → KV • 2 years ago

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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### Which drugs should be legal?

211 comments • a year ago

DrSuess — In a lot of cases, "the drug problem" as we discuss it, isn't a drug problem. It's a social and economic issue. Cyclical poverty, mental health ...

### Oh Come On

1 comment • a year ago

Sensorfire — I'd been to the first turtle page before, but this is my first time finding this.

### Ask a Question, Answer a Question – Round 4

513 comments • a year ago

Tikhung — This has already been answered (thanks Kristen!), but seriously, just write. Write whatever the hell you is on your mind about the world you want ...

### Tell us about a time when you were brave

115 comments • a year ago

Barry Altshule — In 1972, I was babysitting my girlfriend's 3 year old son while his mom was out one evening. The child was asleep in his room when ...

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Enrico Marocco

Here's an interactive version of "The Apple Game" test:  
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