

Reality Testing

Exercise

“Reality testing is the ability to assess the correspondence between what is experienced and what really exists...it is the capacity to see things objectively, the way they are rather than the way we wish or fear them to be” (Stein and Book, EQ Edge, p. 159)

It is often said, there are three views of everything that happens:

1. My view
2. Your view
3. The truth

Reality testing is the quest to see things how they are, in truth.

The following are some exercises to help you see things how they really are.

- Practice distinguishing between facts (“I made a 70 on that paper”) and self-evaluations (“I’m a lousy writer”) and inferences (“That professor doesn’t like me”). Focus on the facts and make any needed changes.
- The next time you have to make a big decision, write down three facts to support your conclusion (not three opinions, three inferences or three ideas). If the decision is not based on at least three facts, keep searching for additional facts before making your decision.
- A good personality assessment is the MBTI (Myers-Briggs). You can take the simple and brief questionnaire here: <http://www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes2.asp> After you have finished taking the brief questionnaire, you will be given 4 letters that identify your personality profile. If the 3rd letter is an “F” it means you are a “feeler” and generally tend to make decisions based heavily on feelings. Of course, if this is you, reality testing is doubly challenging! It is even more important for you, if you are an “F” to understand your emotions and the place they have in your decision making. Whether you are an “F” or “T,” consider the following:
 - Invite one or more objective people into your life and:
 - Commit to consult them in big decisions you have to make
 - Commit to listen to and abide by their counsel

Of course, if you give someone this kind of power in your life, you must trust them wholeheartedly. You must listen to them even when your feelings may tell you to do otherwise. This is very difficult for those of us who tend towards a “feeling” orientation, but the results are well worth it. They help us see truth when our emotions may tend to obscure truth.