Communication & Self-Concept

Chapter
Nine
Focus Questions

• What role does communication play in developing personal identity?

• What is the generalized other, and how does it shape personal identity?
Focus Questions

• What are the values and risks of self-disclosing communication?

• How can you create a supportive context for your personal growth?
Communication & Personal Identity

• The self
  – is an ever-changing system of perspectives
  – is formed and sustained in communication with others and ourselves
The Self Arises in Communication with Others

- George Herbert Mead
- Self-fulfilling prophecies
- Particular others
- Reflected appraisal
- The generalized other
Communication with Family Members

- Direct Definition
- Identity Scripts
- Attachment Styles

**Figure 9.1** ATTACHMENT STYLES
Source: Adapted from Wood, 1997, p. 21.
Communication with Peers

• Reflected appraisals

• Social comparisons

• Self-disclosure
Johari Window

• Four Panes
  – Open
  – Blind
  – Hidden
  – Unknown

Figure 9.2  The Johari Window
Uncertainty Reduction Theory

• People find uncertainty uncomfortable

• They are motivated to use communication to reduce uncertainty

• Uncertainty is very high during initial encounters

• Self-disclosure may be used to reduce uncertainty early in relationships
Communication with Society

• Race

• Gender

• Sexual orientation

• Socioeconomic Level
Guideline for Communicating with Ourselves

- Reflect critically on social perspectives
- Commit to personal growth
- Self-disclose appropriately
- Create a supportive context for the change you seek
Who Are Your Friends?

- Uppers
- Downers
- Vultures
Summary

• Communication & personal identity

• The self arises in communication with others

• Communication with family members

• Communication with peers
Summary

• Johari Window

• Uncertainty Reduction Theory

• Communication with Society

• Communicating with Ourselves