

Sample Self Reflection Essay

Dictionary.com defines personality, in part, as “the quality of being a person; existence as a self-conscious human being; personal identity”. Our personality is the natural and genetic aspect of who we are. It defines our connection with ourselves and with the world around us, and it embodies the collection of individual qualities that make us unique. My personality, according to the personality inventories we discussed, involves low public speaking anxiety, high self-monitoring, average Machiavellianism, internal locus of control, low narcissism, average loneliness, and secure attachment style. My personality influences my self-concept and the ways I communicate, relate, and form relationships with others.

Personality Report of Public Speaking Anxiety

I have relatively low public speaking anxiety due to my experience in public speaking and my natural tendency to feel secure and confident in front of crowds. My proficiency in public speaking was mostly developed when I was a teaching assistant in a Public Speaking class for two quarters last year. As a Public Speaking TA, I helped many college students plan, develop and deliver presentations to large audience. I assisted all students individually by helping them choose topics, formulate logical and emotional appeals, organize necessary information and plan effective deliveries. Most importantly, I helped students develop confidence and openness when speaking publicly. Having successfully completed the course in the preceding quarter, I was able to develop my confidence and experience in public speaking even further once I taught the subject to others.

Self-Monitoring

My high score on the Self-Monitoring assessment was not surprising. I consider my behavior as very adaptive, flexible, and adjustable to different situations. I also believe that I have high sensitivity to others and their reactions, which is what allows me to adapt my behavior easily when faced with different people and situations. My experiences throughout middle school and high school almost demanded that I behave with great adaptability and flexibility, as I went to five different schools in six years. After being born and raised in Israel, my family and I moved to Texas once my father received a job offering there. In Texas I went to three different schools in three years, each with its own defined culture and community. Then my family and I moved once again to California, where I attended high school for two years and before moving to De Anza. While adjusting to the significant academic and demographic differences between the states and the schools, I had to continuously invest energy in socializing and developing new friendships every time I moved. This continuous struggle eventually taught me how to easily form new relationships and present myself in a way that is likeable and appropriate in each situation. After traveling and interacting with so many different cultures and people, I was able to become the high self-monitoring person that I am today.

Machiavellianism

I scored just above average on the Machiavellian scale, and I strongly agree with my result. Morality is not foreign to me, as I generally seek to act ethically and to see the good in others while doing good to others. In fact, many times I have sacrificed my own well being or comfort for the sake of helping others. For two years I volunteered weekly in the Israeli Scouts organization, where I served as a day and camp counselor for twenty fourth graders. As a counselor, I develop age appropriate programs that educated and connected my pupils and I supervised kids during activities and free-time. I also led morale routines, comforted homesick children, guided field trips, set up arts and crafts, organized daily meals and conducted clean-up. The counseling position was often time consuming and exhausting, but I did it willingly and without pay simply for the benefit of seeing my pupils enjoy my activities as they grew closer to one another. This illustrates that acting morally and doing good to others is satisfying to me even when I do not receive favors in return.

However, I also understand that being self-serving and having “flexible” morality is necessary sometimes in order to gain respect from others, especially when in a position of authority or leadership. Even when I was volunteering selflessly as a counselor, I often had to be assertive and refuse to let my pupils do activities they liked when those conflicted with my own goals for the group, the organization’s policies, or the well-being of the group dynamics. Today, when I serve in any leadership position, I try to balance my morality with assertiveness in order to be a just and effective leader.

Locus of Control

I have somewhat high tendency towards an internal locus of control. I mostly see myself as responsible for my own actions, thereby regarding myself accountable for my rewards and punishments. Having an internal locus of control can be seen as positive because it motivates me to work harder as an individual, while rarely feeling hopeless or out of control. Yet it can also be regarded as negative, as I tend to blame myself first for any failure or lacking performance. One of the greatest decisions I have ever made, which is to join the Israeli Defense Forces this summer, was heavily influenced by existential lifestyle. Joining the Israeli military, rather than following the accepted path of transferring and finishing my B.A, was a decision I made knowing how such a move could influence my life. Particularly in the military setting, where I will have little control or determination over many situations, I will be able to gain an essential understanding of how to keep myself in control when outside factors are not.

Narcissism

My internal locus of control may be the reason for my relatively low Narcissism score. As I mentioned before, I tend to take almost complete responsibility for the rewards and/or punishments I obtain. I criticize myself first when my performance fails, and so I often become a perfectionist when given academic, vocational, or social tasks. Another reason for my low Narcissism score is my high sensitivity and adaptability to external factors (as shown by my high

self-monitoring score). The result of this assessment is yet another example of how my personality influences my self concept and my relationships with others.

Loneliness

I disagreed with my results for this survey when I got my initial score (which claimed that I was much lonelier than the average college student). I immediately revised my answers and changed “Rarely” to “Never” wherever I considered my experiences of loneliness as extremely rare. As I wondered what motivated me so much to change, or perhaps justify my answers, I understood that loneliness in itself is seen as weakness in our age and culture. Being social is not defined by having a few intimate relationships, but rather by having many semi-superficial friends on one’s phone or cyber social network. Personally, I have a large array of less-than-intimate relationships that I maintain for educational, vocational, informational, and diplomatic purposes. However, the relationships that I enjoy the most are intimate relationships that I have with a small number of friends and relatives, who make me feel truly supported, accepted, respected, and understood. Those are the few relationships that prevent me from feeling lonely, and the ones I work hardest to maintain.

Attachment Styles and Close Relationships

According to this assessment, I have a secure attachment style. This indicates that I tend to have relatively enduring and satisfying relationships and that I am comfortable expressing my emotions. Having a secure attachment style is a result of having low attachment-related anxiety and low to average attachment-related avoidance. I have low relationship anxiety mostly because I am confident in my ability to form new relationships and easily develop intimacy within them. My confidence can be related to my traveling, as I learned to quickly familiarize myself with new people and places when moving from one school to another every year. Moving so often also taught me to open and express my emotions easily to others, which is the reason for my low attachment-related avoidance. However, my relational avoidance is closer to average because I also regard myself as individualistic, and I often prefer to rely on myself rather than depend on others. This can be illustrated by my decision to join the College Advantage program in De Anza, which allowed me to skip the senior year of high school and take all my classes in De Anza instead. As a College Advantage student, I continued to college knowing that I could progress academically and socially without depending on the high school system for protection and guidance.

My low public speaking anxiety, high self-monitoring, average Machiavellianism, internal locus of control, low narcissism, average loneliness, and secure attachment style do and most likely will continue to lead me towards goals that involve leadership, social involvement, and public affairs. My personality is the reason why I chose Speech Communications as my major in college, while it is also the reason why I am planning to join the military next year. The results of these

personality inventories increased my understanding of my self-concept and why I communicate, relate, and form relationships in certain ways. I am quite satisfied with my results and what they reflect on my personality and relationships, while this information will help me develop more successful relationships in the future. In situations involving conflict and uncertainty, I will refer to this information in order to act according to my strengths and knowledge. And even if certain aspects of my personality and relationships change, I will always try to maintain high self-awareness and honesty with myself about who I am.