

Love Quotient



LQ & The Three Parts Of Self

by [chriswise](#) | [Self Love Practices](#) | [The "I Love You" Practice - The Love Quotient](#)

Why is understanding the different aspects of self important to LQ and to love in general?

The core of [LQ](#) and why LQ is so significant is that while we are generally taught the importance of loving other people, we are not really taught or encouraged to love ourselves. When the topic of loving one's self or [self-love practices](#) are discussed, we commonly hear objections and resistance towards this idea. "Oh, I already love myself" or "that's selfish" are common themes. Loving one's self does not refer to loving our ego or our identity i.e. who we think we are or who we relate to as ourselves. It is important to understand that there are multiple aspects of self and it is equally important to highlight the aspect of self that

we are directing our love towards, namely the inner child. There are a handful of popular definitions, or different ways of understanding the three parts of self. Some of the most notable include Sigmund Freud's model of the psyche, Eric Burns' Transactional Analysis and The Three Selves, as defined by Bruce Dickson. In this article we will cover the most popular aspects of self and how they relate to each other. While some of these concepts may be familiar, a comparison of the models will introduce new ideas and put these concepts into perspective. This will help guide you to understand the part of self, our inner child, that we are actively loving in order to increase our LQ.

Freud's Model of the Psyche

In 1923 Freud developed a structural model of the mind and while many of Freud's theories are extremely controversial and unsubstantiated, he is nevertheless regarded as the father of modern psychology and some of his theories form the basis of psychoanalytic practice. According to the Freudian model the mind consists of three parts, the id, the ego and the superego. The **id** is present from infancy. It is driven by sexuality and aggression and is largely instinctual. It is neither realistic nor logical and is concerned mainly with the fulfillment of our basic needs and wants. The **ego** which is different to the modern concept of ego i.e. thinking very highly of one's self, is according to Freud developed during our second or third year of life. The ego can think, observe reality and decide how to act. It operates in both the conscious and unconscious mind and thus allows us to satisfy the needs of the Id in a way that is socially acceptable. It is the ego's function to mediate the constant inner conflict between the id and the superego. At around the age of five, we begin to take in lessons from our environment, our parents, society and organized religion. Our concept of morality is developed and we learn about right and wrong. This is called the **superego**. The superego motivates us to behave in a way that is socially and morally acceptable. Typically, the id and the superego need to be kept in balance, when one or the other becomes dominant we may display either destructive behavior or rigid perfectionism, and when these two are at odds it will present as a moral dilemma. These different parts of self exist at different levels of consciousness. The id and superego are unconscious while the

ego is conscious. Between the conscious and unconscious exists the preconscious. In the preconscious we have thoughts which are not suppressed and therefore readily accessible.

Transactional Analysis

In the 1950s Eric Berne developed a model for understanding the ego states. Transactional Analysis (TA) is arguably one of the most commonly applied forms of therapy currently in use. TA therapists focus less on understanding the personality of the patient and more on the transactions present within relationships. TA proposes three ego states; the parent, the adult and the child. The **adult ego state** is analytical, logical and concerned mainly with collecting, organizing and storing information. The adult ego state uses words like how, why, yes and no and comes across as mature, rational and reasonable. The **parent ego state** consists of attitudes feelings and behaviors we picked up from our parents and other external sources. It has been described as a recording which plays in our heads. The parent ego state can be nurturing i.e. (caring, loving and helpful) or controlling (critical, disapproving and judgemental). The parent ego state can be problematic when it is triggered spontaneously at an inappropriate moment. The **child ego state** consists of all those impulses we possessed as infants. The child ego state can be either natural or adapted. The natural child is spontaneous, fun-loving, curious and energetic whereas the adapted child is more restrained. The adapted child has been socialized and has thus learned to control their impulses. As an adapted child we know that it is important to share, to say please and thank you and to take turns but unfortunately feelings of

anxiety, guilt, fear and depression could stem from the adapted child. TA is particularly useful in couples, group and family therapy scenarios and suggests that it is our own behavior and not that of the other person that is the overriding factor in transactions. The model further suggests that we are constantly shifting between the **parent** (nurturing or controlling), **child** (adapted or natural) and **adult ego** states. In most instances therapy is aimed at bringing us closer to our adult state, which is the preferred ego state. In the adult state we think, feel and behave according to the here and now. It is assumed that in the adult state we have access to all information whereas in the parent state we act out what we learned from our parents and other authority figures. In the child state we think, feel and behave as we did when we were children. Often these behaviors surface in response to some kind of trigger. TA encourages us to become aware of our triggers and responses.

The Three Selves

The idea of having three selves has its roots in Hawaiian culture and shamanic tradition. The western version of this model was introduced by Max Freedom Long in the 1940s. Twenty years later the model was expanded by educator and speaker John-Rogers whose contribution filled a gap in theoretical understanding of holistic healing. *You Have Three Selves*, published by Bruce Dickson in 2012 is the first known textbook on the subject to appear in western media. In this book Dickson describes our **higher self** as our intuition, our guardian angel or perhaps the inner voice that whispers guidance when we

need it. This is one of the few models that brings spirituality into the equation, defining the higher self as the one who is open to spiritual beings, and the one who "passes the request on up the line" when we ask for spiritual assistance. Our **conscious self** on the other hand is the more active or outer self. The conscious self makes daily choices e.g. which route to take to work, what to have for lunch, which project to prioritize and so on. Our conscious self is the one that is aware, takes physical form and takes action. Our **basic self** contains the inner child or Freud's superego. It is the operating system of the human psyche and it is reactive in nature. Our memories, routines and habits stem from our basic self. Since Dickson is not a Psychiatrist but an Intuitive Health Practitioner, he takes a holistic view of the psyche, integrating and incorporating the physical body. The basic self is said to be responsible for our senses and the functioning of our bodies, namely our metabolism, respiratory system, and circulation. According to Dickson we are not always aware of our basic self and the messages, both positive or negative which we receive from it. Most interestingly this theory posits that self-talk is between the basic self and the conscious self and that we "can hear the words, hear the negative messages we give ourselves (conscious) or it can be lower in frequency, towards the inner child where the words themselves will be more obscure and the feelings will predominate (subconscious)." This model suggest that the basic and higher selves reside in the subconscious and superconscious and are accessed through loving kindness, meditation, listening and muscle testing.

The LQ Model

When we hear “that’s selfish” or “I already love myself” in response to the suggestion of loving one’s self, it is the conscious self, adult ego state, or identity i.e. the way we show up in the world, that the individual is unknowingly referring to, but that is not the part of self that we are talking about. When we talk about developing our LQ, loving one’s self or the “I love you” practice it is the inner child that we are loving. **In LQ terms we refer to “inner child/self”, “conscious self” and “higher self”.** The models of self and the thinking behind them, from Freud’s *id* to Burns’ *child ego state* to Dickson’s *basic self* theories all underscore an inner self with childlike characteristics which leads us to our model for the “inner self” or “inner child”. The **inner self** we describe most closely resembles the innocent and sometimes unloved or overly criticized **inner child** that exists within each of us as described and popularized by John Bradshaw. The **conscious self** can be compared to the adult ego state, the conscious self or the ego. The conscious self makes decisions and takes action in real time. The conscious self has an awareness of self, our own identity, or more specifically who we think we are. The **higher self** is the part of self that is connected with God or the Universe. This is the aspect of self that is open to source. It is also where our intuition stems from. When we develop a relationship with our higher self, a symbiotic and loving connection is created between all aspects of self. The following table lists and shows the different terms as they relate to one another:

Freud	TA	3 S's	The LQ Model
Id	Child	Basic Self	Inner Child
Ego	Parent	Conscious Self	Conscious Self
Superego	Adult	Higher Self	Higher Self

Who Is Loving Whom?

Sometimes the question gets asked who is loving whom? When I say “I love you”, who is the I? I like to look at self love as our higher self loving our inner child and it is our higher self loving our inner child that changes how the conscious self shows up in life. A good way to describe it is, if you were an angel who has come down from heaven or a divine master that is now in a body, it is that aspect of self that is loving the inner child. Another way to look at the I is the adult or grown-up version of ourselves AKA our conscious self loving our inner child. In this way, we give ourselves the love we may or may not have received as children from our own caregivers. However, I think that defining the I is less important than defining the you. What matters most is defining the you because that is the aspect of self that LQ points to loving. For the purpose of this article, making the distinction between our identity (i.e. who we see ourselves as) and our inner self or inner child is most important. It is the inner child that needs more love not less.

Improving our LQ by Understanding the Dynamic Nature of the Human Psyche

There are both similarities and differences between the three models discussed in this article. Each of these models propose a corresponding level of consciousness i.e. how aware we are of the motives and emotions which stem from that level of consciousness. We will explore how the three parts of self relate to the different aspects of consciousness in an upcoming article on the topic. It is important to note that, while these theories originated at different periods in the last century, one has built upon and incorporated the ideas of the other with each model being developed in response to a different set of goals or objectives. While Freud sought to understand the human psyche, Burns gave us a practical model by which to improve our day-to-day contracts or “transactions” with others. Dickson on the other hand, re-introduces spirituality and links physical and mental health while suggesting tools for healing one through the other. One thing everyone agrees on is that human beings are complex and that we each embody different aspects of self, irrespective of the language being used. When we know and understand the aspect of self that we are loving we are less hesitant to do so and by loving ourselves we are able to develop a relationship with all aspects of self thereby improving our love quotient and in turn enriching both our lives and the lives of those around us. We would love to hear from you. Please feel free to share your thoughts and ideas in the comments section below. Watch this space for regular articles about LQ and its many applications.

