Oscar Wilde once said, “Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.” This may resonate strongly with some; for others, however, one may be left with the question, “Yes, but who am I? And am I the person I want to be?” The process of knowing one’s true, stable self, may not be as simple as it sounds. First it is important to note that one’s identity is not static, and it is impacted by any number of factors over any number of years. While it is expected that one develops a stable sense of identity during adolescence, this process may happen earlier or later, based on one’s culture, family, and life circumstances. While pieces of our identity may be as inherent as the color of hair we were born with, other pieces of our identity may shift over time, such as our spiritual beliefs. Further, pieces of our identity may be more salient to us at different times—at one time we may more strongly identify as “caretaker,” and at another, we may more strongly identify as “care-receiver.” From a mental health perspective, one may find themselves in distress when their view of their self (self-image) does not align with their ideal self (the person who they would like to be). As such, when we think about ourselves and who we would like to be, it is important to first take stock of all of our varied parts of ourselves, as well as our roles, accomplishments, and experiences. Next, it is important to consider what we value and what we prioritize in our lives. Next, we must consider what we hope to accomplish. By reflecting on who we are, what we value, and what we want to accomplish, we may more clearly begin to identify any discrepancies in our self-image and ideal self for instance, a bad habit that is not in line with our value system that may keep us from meeting a particular goal. This discrepancy may help illuminate something we had hoped to shift all along!

Quote for Thought:
“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” — Aristotle

Who am I?
What goes into identity formation and how to be the “you” that YOU want to be

Written by: Jill Fay, Psy.D.

Alcohol Awareness: Fast Facts
- According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and prevention, excessive alcohol use has led to about 88,000 deaths each year in the US between 2006 and 2010.
- Excessive use of alcohol contributed to 1 in 10 deaths among adults aged 20-64 years.

Consider the following:
- Limit your drinking to no more than one drink per day for women or two drinks per day for men.
- Keep track of how much you drink.
- Do not drink when you are upset.
- Consider reasons why it may be important for you to choose not to drink.

Visit ncadd.org to learn more.

Sexual Assault Awareness: Fast Facts
- According to the CDC, as of 2012, nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men in the US have reported experiencing rape at some time in their lives.
- It has been estimated that 68% of sexual assaults are not reported to law enforcement.

If responding to a survivor:
- Believe them and hear them.
- Avoid judgment.
- Offer to support them as they connect with resources (medical, psychological, legal)
- Check in with them periodically.
- Get support for yourself.

Visit rainn.org to learn more.