

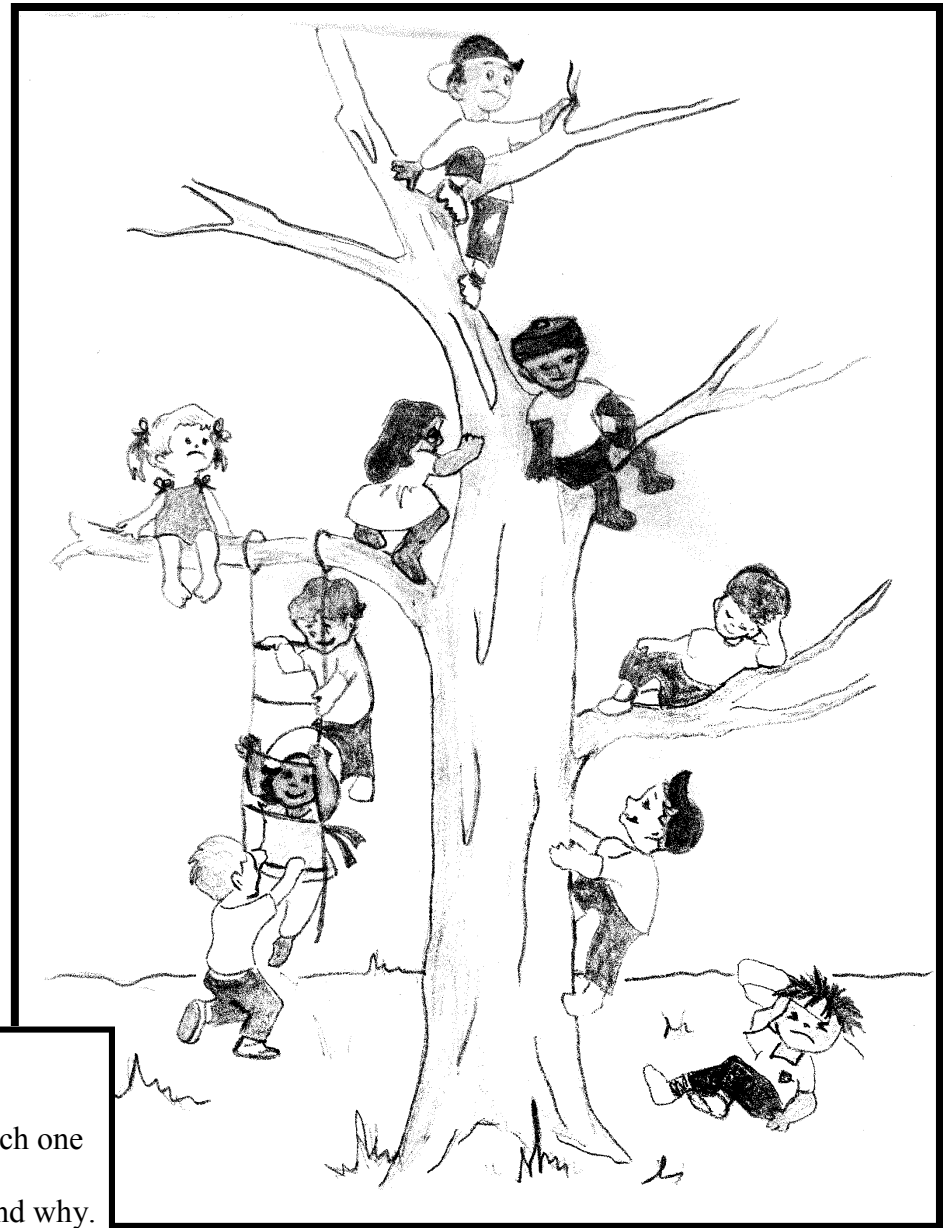


TO KNOW MYSELF IS TO FIND MYSELF

Masks are a protective covering shielding us from hurt, rejection, embarrassment and feelings of inadequacy. They also are worn to win acceptance and approval. We all want to be valued, but sometimes we do not value ourselves. So we put on an "outside" face to hide our true selves. And sometimes, we wear it so well, so often, we fool ourselves.

Masks can be good. In fact, in order to discover our core mask we ask ourselves, "What is my best quality or what do I like most about me?" We don't peel off our masks as one peels the skin from a banana. They are invested with our good qualities. We try to be aware of them, how we act when we wear them and how they affect our relationship with our spouse both positively and negatively. And we choose to keep or to discard them, based on how congruent they are with who we are or want to become.

The wearing of a mask is a learned experience as we observe by watching children. They "let it all hang out." They truly express their feelings, until we parents teach them differently. Thus if we look back to our childhood for an incident where we might have felt embarrassed or unworthy, we can probably see masks forming.



FIND YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

In this drawing, which child do you identify with, or which one best portrays you right now?

Share with your spouse which child you would choose and why.