

## Who Is That Person In The Mirror?

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Who is the real you? How do you know who you really are, what you truly represent? Finding out could be hard. This article explains. Find Bill Allin at <http://billallin.com>

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The state of your life is nothing more than a reflection of your state of mind.  
- [Dr. Wayne W. Dyer](#), American self-help author, writer, speaker (b. 1940)

Wayne Dyer ranks among the top few advocates of the "Change your mind, change your life" school of thought about life. I have admired his thinking for many years, though I have stayed away from his so-called New Age thinking about spirituality.

Yet I can't avoid the attraction of this quote, though he may have intended something different than what I take from it. I grant that if you look at life positively, life looks positive

When I look in the mirror I don't really see me. What I see is a right-left-reversed image of what others see when they look at me. Yet others see what they want to see when they look at me anyway, not necessarily the real me. The real me doesn't show up--has no way of making itself that

When I look in the mirror I see only the vessel I use as my travelling companion. Crippled at birth but recovered enough to walk and run close enough to what other kids could do to look "normal." Brain damaged at birth (breech, no blood to the brain for too long) but managed to reroute enough neural pathways over the succeeding decades to get by.

The man in the mirror had much to overcome. He received no nurturing, no teaching, nothing most of us expect from parents for the critical first six years of life. When he "went public" at age six, a feral child newly exposed to peers who had grown and learned in normal ways, it was as if he had just be born. At six years, this little fellow unknowingly had walls created around him intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically as his age peers grew while he just got a bit taller. He had, in effect, a deep well to climb out of if he were to survive in a world that cared no more about him than his parents had.

Some time during high school he learned to read, though he remained functionally illiterate until past age 44. He got a girlfriend whom he eventually married and with whom he had two children. Co-supporting his young family he secured a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in education--all the while still functionally illiterate, never having read a single book all the way through.

Why do I write about myself in the third person? I can't see any of that in the mirror. People I meet can't see any of that. In fact, I am no longer that person because I have changed so much.

In the process of climbing out of that pit, I got into habits of learning and improving

My father and mother knew virtually nothing about parenting. They taught me everything they knew about parenting. I used that little bit of learning about parenting to fail badly raising my own children. When my first wife left our family, I hurt. When she later died and my children decided they no longer found me of any value, I made up my mind to learn why. I knew it would be hard and it was. I knew much learning would be required and it was. What I didn't know along the way was that I would surpass what most other adults knew about parenting only to find myself blazing new ground, beating a path for those to follow.

I went from a know-nothing who could do little physically, had no skills and could only follow the lead of others to someone who takes the lead himself. That wasn't easy. Knowing nothing has its own problems, but leaders always have enemies who don't want to see others succeed where they can't or don't care to go.

I changed dramatically as a person. None of that change shows in the mirror. My life changed because I made up

my mind that knowing more than most people about how children grow and develop meant little if I didn't spread the word. I kept climbing because leaders can be seen and heard better from greater heights.

I became someone much greater than I could ever have imagined as a child or as a young adult. I know that person better than the child or the young adult I used to be. I know that person intimately. I like him. None of that shows in the mirror.

Today the man in the mirror and I tolerate each other. The real me pays little attention to the mirror man because he isn't like me and he has changed only by aging. The real me changed by growing, spiritually, emotionally, socially, intellectually. The real me is still a motor moron because I depend so heavily on the man in the mirror and he is still that barely recovered cripple

How much attention should we pay to the person in our mirror? That person does absolutely nothing to help us. He or she gets older and insists upon demonstrating the effects of that aging in the mirror daily. The person in the mirror never gets better, only older.

Pity the person who cares deeply about the image they see in the mirror. That image will inevitably change, but never for the better. The person who identifies closely with the image in the mirror is destined to eventually be both old and stupid. The person in the mirror never gets smarter either.

There is a saying: Aging is inevitable, getting old is voluntary. I don't care for that saying. I prefer to think that the person in the mirror gets older while I keep getting better.

I do get better. So should you. If you haven't already decided to get better, you can make the decision and act on it today. Simply making the decision makes you better. Knowing that you need to learn in order to get better,

If you make the decision to get better before you reach the end of this article, you will already be better for it.

, you will feel positive about life. I grant that with few exceptions the media try to make our world look much worse than it is by using the Shock and Awe strategy to secure listeners, viewers and readers. But there is more to this quote than that."public"--either in the mirror or to others. myself I have retained throughout my life. When most people slowed down from learning at a rapid rate as they got older, I sped up because I could and didn't know there was an unwritten rule that you could stop when you wanted as an adult. with a sometimes dysfunctional brain.and that no matter how much money you earn and spend won't help, is a big leap forward in your quest to get better. Wow! Congratulations.

But hurry because....

Bill Allin is the author of ***Turning It Around: Causes and Cures for Today's Epidemic Social Problems***, a guidebook of epic importance but easy to read on the subject of child development and learning and of parenting. Learn more at

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