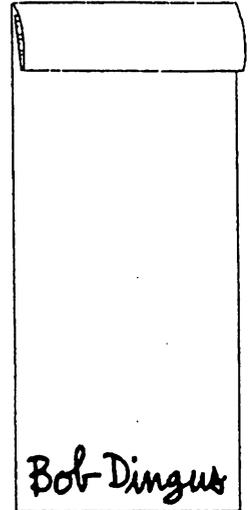


WHAT OTHERS THINK OF ME

The following exercise is designed to give young people the opportunity to discover what their peer group thinks of them, thus helping each young person to develop a better self-image and to see where changes should be made.

Give each person a 3x8-inch slip of paper. Have them write their name at the bottom and a one-word self-description at the top. They are then instructed to fold the paper down from the top twice to conceal the word they wrote. The paper should look like this:



The kids then exchange papers twice, so that no one knows for sure who was their paper. Each person then writes at the top of the page a one-word description of the person named at the bottom. Kids should be instructed to be honest, kind, constructive, and as helpful as possible to the person they are describing.

(If they don't know the person at all, they should leave it blank.) The papers are folded down to conceal the word they wrote, and then exchanged again and the process is repeated until the papers are full of one-word descriptions of the person named at the bottom.

The completed papers are returned back to the person whose name is at the bottom, and the kids are given a few minutes to look them over. Each person can then compare their own self-image with how others think of them. Discussion can follow, with young people sharing their feelings about the exercise, and what their response to it will be.

This exercise is best when groups know each other pretty well ahead of time. As the leader, you will need to help kids to not take the experience too personally and give them guidance in evaluating it as well. It can be pointed out that although what others say about us may be valid, our own self-image is also valid. Maturity is the ability to accept criticism or praise without being threatened or thinking too highly of ourselves. We can instead use such information as a source of renewal in our own personal lives. Tie this in with related Scripture and instruction from the Word of God.