

### **The Role of the Anatomy in the Search for Self**

Many people standing naked before their bathroom mirrors very early in the morning or very, very late at night, often ask themselves in bewildered anguish, "*Who am I?*"<sup>1</sup>

Good question, though perhaps wrong environment.

Nevertheless, in constructing this guide, we were determined to explore every nook and fleshy cranny no matter how iffy the prospects, and thus we approached the staff at the redoubtable *Who Am I Clinic* based in the suburbs of Dallas, Texas, concerning a controlled anatomical study in selfhood. They shrugged and said, Yeah, sure, why not, could be a giggle.

#### *Environmental conditions*

A group of twenty-one naked people (ten women, ten men, one questionable) were placed in separate, very private cubicles and asked to

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<sup>1</sup> Others may ask, "What am I?" - "Is this me?" - "I'm becoming a pudgy about the thighs"—but these are all mere variations on the basic who-am-I motif.

stand before full-length one-way mirrors to examine themselves intimately while the clinic's doctors, totally impartial, observed the goings-on through little cracks in the wall in fascination.

### *Toes*

Many people began with their toes. However, individuals staring at their toes for a long time experienced a skull skin crawling sensation of omnidirectional dissatisfaction. Many flexed their toes experimentally and when nothing far-reaching seemed to happen in their lives, let alone their souls, they sighed and their eyes drifted from their toes and towards their eyebrows, which they tended to groom in compensation. This behavior may be explained by the fact that toes, by and large, in and among themselves, one next to the other, are not the most inspiring bit of naked anatomy<sup>2</sup>.

### *Feet*

Merely referred to as the flat things that keep the toes effectively attached to the rest of the anatomy, as well as helping individuals remain upright, mobile, and snigger when tickled.

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the subjects became inexplicably fixated on the toe just next to the smallest toe, and began wondering, "What *possible* use does that toe have? I don't remember having *ever* used it." The subjects were then reminded via a ghostly voice over an unseen intercom that they had embarked upon a digression in this anatomical search for self and that it was better to speedily proceed to the next bit of anatomy.

### *Ankles*

See feet.

### *Knees*

Here the study approached more interesting territory; some of the subjects began to have a bit of tingling, vague-ish inner meaning sensations<sup>3</sup>. However, the knees were not found to be particularly aesthetic objects. Yet in their dependable crease and bend, there was a certain philosophical, even fundamental logic and breathe of imagination. Some subjects enjoyed a dawning of self-awareness but were unable to verbalize adequately. Hence, conclusions on the knee as self-stimulators remain ambiguous, while ethics forbid us to pass along any preliminary conclusions, which, if incorrectly applied in the privacy of your own home, could prove slightly degrading, depending on your personal moral code and local city ordinances. As further controlled experiments are carried out, results shall be made public in the pages of the bi-monthly publication, "*Psychology Tomorrow, News from the Knees*" section.

### *Thighs*

And particularly the back of the thighs. The majority of the subjects found a certain sense of peacefulness while gazing at the rear portion of their thighs in the mirrors. Some had startling insights regarding their childhood that they adamantly refused to tell us. One elderly female, however, was

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<sup>3</sup>Others passed quickly from the knees right to the thighs where they believed more truth lay; yet for a kinky minority, knees were the beginning of their true essence and were not to be knocked.

heard to exclaim, "So *that's* the meaning of the cosmos."

### *The Private Parts*

Naturally everyone was extremely eager to pass on to this region and really start finding him or herself. However, due to the nature of this book, which is aimed at the general reader and not to titillate or encourage utterly egocentric behavior, we find that relating the shocking findings of Self and the Crotch Zone would elicit in the broad public a certain—no, we are informed by our lawyer that we are not to go forward and place in cold hard print what exactly went on. Sorry<sup>4</sup>.

### *Waist and Navel*

Hardly anyone could be induced to discover inner meaning in his or her waistlines. When urged for some corollary, anything, some subjects turned hostile. One typical remark went, "There's no *real* me in my waist. It's just the place where I hang the top of my pants." Most subjects concurred: the waist possessed too many overtones of daily practicality to warrant any bursts of self-revelation.

The *navel*, as mentioned elsewhere in this book, should not be a place of departure for finding yourself. It is merely a reference point. Several subjects offered pseudo-mystical, thoroughly unscientific observations on their navels.

However, as a courtesy, fifteen minutes were allowed for general navel gazing, with the only valid comment worthy of note being, "It's sort of like

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<sup>4</sup> Be that as it may, *we're* having a great time reading and re-reading the dirty bits at the laboratory.

watching TV." Yet, for the record, we include some of the subjects' valuation concerning the immediate, though *not* lasting effects of naval gazing:

"I feel a real sense of inner knowledge."

"I feel a real sense of outer knowledge."

"How did all that lint get in there!"

"I want to go back to my private parts."

"The mystery of existence."

"Why me?"

"Why you?"

"Uh-oh...."

### *Chests and Breasts*

Women tended to examine their breasts and feel a warm sense of evolutionary purpose and meaning.

Men tended to look at their nipples and experience a much suppressed breast-envy neurosis, which quickly evolved into philosophical ramblings, wondering why natural selection had slipped up and left them with non-functional nipples?

### *The Neck*

See Feet, same principle.

### *The Head*

Every subject had a particular fascination with the head. Many were

observed to turn it from left to right, and vice versa, plumbing the depths.

People were observed to pull their chins, flick their earlobes and stick out their tongues as they searched for themselves. Only two and a half subjects succeeded in discovering themselves in this manner and were given permission to go home.

One subject found only half of himself; he worked the nightshift on an automotive assembly line; he said he would return to the clinic next week and pick up the rest of him if he could get time off.

One subject stared into his left nostril for some minutes before declaring, "I ... I think I see someone."

Another person turned her head away from the mirror, then look back real quick, in this way experimentally trying to find herself while she wasn't looking<sup>5</sup>.

Yet another subject glared at herself in the mirror and demanded fiercely, "I know you're in there somewhere ... come out, you coward ... come on, I dare you...."

One subject was caught trying to twist his head off his neck, mumbling, "I know, I *know* if I could just get this off I'd finally set myself free and know who I am<sup>6</sup>.

A last subject stared glumly at himself, muttering, "I don't believe it. This is modern science? Pristine experimental setting. Supposedly the latest in technology and government grants. Yet here I am, a well-paid middle-aged banking executive naked in front of a mirror being observed for insight and

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<sup>5</sup> We sent her home, too.

<sup>6</sup> He was remanded into custody and held over for a few days extra observation.

significance. And I pay taxes for this...."

Upon concluding these experiments, the subjects were excused to go home, or back to their places of businesses, or the mental institutes who'd loaned them out to us for a while at little or no expense, while the researchers, doctors and medical students and a few social engineers and one plain housewife added for a touch of color, retired to their labs for the following eighteen months in order to study and marshal analytical data relating to the results of the following different lines of investigation. In the end, they admitted only to a few hesitant conclusions that could only be verified by further experiments.

Government grants have been secured.