

**Self-esteem** [*Analysing Identity: Chapter 2* © Peter Weinreich]

*One's self-esteem is defined as one's overall self-assessment in evaluative terms of the continuing relationship between one's past and current self-images, in accordance with one's value system.*

One's self-esteem is interpreted as a combined assessment of one's evaluation of one's current and past self-images. It is expressed algebraically as the weighted sum of one's standardised evaluations of one's current self-image and one's past self-image, that is

$$\text{Self-esteem: } S = \frac{G_c \hat{R}(E_c) + G_p \hat{R}(E_p)}{G_c + G_p} \quad (7)$$

where the weightings are  $G_c$  and  $G_p$ , one's ego-involvement in one's current and past self-images respectively.

The parameter of self-esteem given by the above expression ranges from  $-1.00$  to  $+1.00$ , from wholly negative to wholly positive, the reference point again being the ideal self. This definition of self-esteem takes into account the notion that the individual's past self-image contributes to the on-going self-evaluative processes as assessed in terms of one's aspirational self, and conforms to the ISA definition of *identity*. The component *past self* and *current self* evaluations will give evidence of whether these processes are progressively developmental - *more positive current than past self* - or anti-developmental - *less positive current than past self*.

As with the current and past self-images, self-esteem is also situated and represented by the presence of  $E_{c1}, E_{c2}, E_{c3}...$  and  $E_{p1}, E_{p2}, E_{p3}...$  in expression 7.

'Self-esteem' is standardised by virtue of the component standardised evaluations of current and past self.