

# SELF PERCEPTION

**Bottom Line:** We cannot be in rhythm with God or in rhythm with others without learning to be in rhythm with ourselves.

**Scripture References:** John 4:3-18; 25-30, Ephesians 1

God loves us no matter what, but can we love ourselves? Your goal is to help students think about the ways they see themselves and to understand that it is significant.

It's always difficult to be honest about our own self-perception. Feel out your group. If you need to share a personal story to get them going, try that. If you need to wait and talk more about this subject when you can call them or spend some time one-on-one, do it. In a world where anorexia, bulimia, cutting and violence are common among students, don't feel like you need to rush them if they are not ready to explore some of their deeper issues--even if those issues are blatantly obvious to you. Remember that you will have other opportunities to talk about identity with your students. For now, you may want to just help students see that their own self-perceptions matter.

***Adjust questions as needed, and don't feel like you need to answer all of them.***

1. What does it mean to be in rhythm with yourself?
2. Does it feel odd that God wants us to love ourselves? What do you think is the most difficult thing about loving yourself?
3. Have you ever known someone who really struggled to be in rhythm with themselves? What was that person like? (Be extra careful here: Make sure students do not name names or talk about people other students will recognize. Set boundaries for your group, and don't let this become a gossip session.)
4. Jesus knew that to meet the Samaritan woman's deepest need He would need to help her see that she was worthy of love. Why did this woman feel unworthy of love?
5. What are some things that could make you feel unworthy of love?
6. Why does loving yourself matter so much?  
How does it affect your relationship with other people?  
How does it affect your relationship with God?  
How does it make you feel?
7. How do we love ourselves? How can you see yourself as God sees you? (Note: Scripture is a great way to remind yourself of who God says you are.)
8. What do you need to discover about yourself today when it comes to being in rhythm with yourself? What is the hardest thing for you to believe about who God says you are?

## **CLOSING CHALLENGE:**

Learning to love yourself and see yourself as God sees you is an ongoing process. No one learns this secret, checks it off their to-do list and moves on. Share with your students how you struggle with staying in rhythm with yourself.