

The Mud

by Edmund DeHart

a brief perspective on human self-perception

I have made some observations throughout my life on people and how they judge or rank themselves socially. Some appear perfectly content with their lives and care very little about how they are viewed by others. This group isn't overly concerned with winning the respect of others, but instead seeks out their own goals, on their own terms. At the other end of the spectrum, there are those that seem to be preoccupied with what others may think or say about them. Furthermore, it appears to me as if this class constantly seeks the approval of others, and by extension, may find it hard to make firm decisions. These, of course, are generalizations, and most of us possess some traits of both classes, and that is probably a healthy thing. However, there are certain humans among us that exhibit a rather diabolical personality characteristic as related societal standing and reputation. This is, that instead of seeking to raise their own stature in society (due to a self-perceived flaw or shortcoming), they look to tear down that of others. Presumably, from a perception of inferiority as related to knowledge of self, these people always target their fire at *others* and not at the cause of the perceived inferiority. I refer to those that exhibit a strong tendency toward this behavior as The Mud.

The reasons for being a member of The Mud may be as many and varied as *the membership* itself. There are those, no doubt, with "spotty" histories, a track record of failed ventures, or other negative occurrences in the past. Well, the truth of the matter is that no human has a perfect history. However, the difference between The Mud and others is a matter of perspective and response. The Mud will tend to dwell on the past, seemingly never able to shake the monkeys off their backs. The opportunity for redemption for The Mud is to drag others into their pool of cloudy, dirty, and stagnated water. The Mud views social standing and reputation as quantitatively relative. So, if *they* measure a "3", and another measures a "7", the solution to this "dilemma" is not to elevate themselves to an "8", but instead attempt to lower the other to a "3". I see, hear, and experience The Mud's tactics all too often – most of us do. One, nearly universal, characteristic of The Mud is an eye for detail - especially when it comes to the faults of others.

There is not a perfect human among us today. We all have experienced failure, made mistakes, and have shortcomings. That is okay. Imperfection is part of being human, but we should never succumb to our failures. Furthermore, it is best to seek a level of respect and reputation that is founded on our own baseline of reference, and not on a perceived ideal position that is relative to others. The Mud is constantly seeking new members. Please, do not let The Mud pull you into their Cesspool of Nowhere.

About the Author:

Edmund DeHart is married and the father of a son, Adrian. His interests include music, digital media and foreign languages. Currently, he is working on several music projects and looks forward to rolling these out in the near future.

You may keep up with many of his works and projects at his website www.edmunddehart.com and The Open Library: <http://openlibrary.org/a>