Evolution of Identity

It is not in the nature of man to be able to pick and choose what attribute of ourselves in which we do not like and be able to just delete it. We are more complex than that. We evolve and grow from a child into an adult and become that person through learning and experiences. Literacy narratives provide a tool to better understand ourselves and to identify who we truly are. We have become the people we are today through many learning experiences and through parental figures teaching us our Primary Discourse. Our Primary Discourse is our most basic self. It is the part of us that learns, grows and changes through time to better understand and be apart of the world we live in. It is our morals, inner thoughts and beliefs that make us who we are and determine how we react to stimuli which is different than everyone else. Gee says that “ A Discourse is a sort of “identity kit” which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write, so as to take on a particular role that others will recognize.” A Discourse is a way to choose an identity but it is not ones true identity. You get to choose what you do with your time, how you spend your life and what people know you for but that is not ones true self, and you can’t choose that.

Your identity is something only you know truly. You have no control over it, you can’t change it and you never will be able to. To think you can is just pretending, shielding yourself from the truth of who you are. You may not like it but your inner thoughts, morals and prayers are yours to do with that you want, but they will never go away. Throughout so many literacy narratives people tell their inner thoughts about their experiences through literacy. Literacy narratives are a tool to better understand ones true self, as you write about your past you reflect. Reflection through writing is one of the best tools to physically see your thoughts, to shed truth to you life about who you are. In Dannielle Usko’s narrative *I Hate Reading* she tells a story about her hate for reading so many books except Junie B. Jones. She revealed that the reason she loved those books was because Junie B seemed fearless, expressive, intelligent and motivated. Dannielle reveals her connection to the books by wanting to be like Junie. She reveals her true self as someone who wants to do things to aspire to do things but is afraid to commit. Afraid to be expressive, afraid to fail. Literacy narratives expose our true selves, if done correctly it should push us to expose our thoughts of ourselves and confront it as Dannielle did.

In Ronnie Mwai’s *My Literacy Narrative* he begins by telling us a story of when he came to America. Being an extravert he tells us about when he enrolled in school he thought he was more gifted than his peers. He had the confidence, but lacked the motivation because his peers were doing well without trying hard, so why couldn’t he. He confronted his past to reveal that he is intelligent, athletic and an overall gifted student but believed he was to gifted to try because his peers weren’t like him. He decided to blend in and just go with it and not truly try because of motivation. He pursued activities he found meaningful and fun and lacked in those he found uninteresting. After realizing this potential for greatness but lack of meaning to do it he decided to overcome his barriers and work hard. He changed his Discourse to better his future, but he will always have those thoughts of “Why?” and “Is it worth it?” No one can rid themselves of these inner thoughts, they are our demons, our curse but like Ronnie you can overcome it and pursue great things.

Bronwyn Williams published an article on the topic of literacy narratives. He talked about how it’s a way of connecting teachers and students by learning who they are. Narratives portray a side of yourself you show everyone but more than that they portray the part of yourself you hide and shield from the world. This can be connected to Gee’s article about Discourse. He tells us about discourses show people who you are, they are a way of identifying a person by connecting them to the group they are/want to be a part of. He tells us that Discourses are who we are, how we act, how we think and how we believe. Two of those are true, you can change to be a part of a discourse by how you talk and act. But you can never change how you think and believe. Those are your morals and inner demons. You can hide it and try your best to get rid of it but they are the one thing in this world that stay with you forever.

A person is more complicated than being able to be identified by the group you align yourself with, the things you do and the people you love. They are a sum of everything you think, do and believe. You can change you Discourse and the way you do it. But your inner thought and beliefs are yours and they can never be taken, dismissed or forgotten about. They tell you how to do everything in your life and no amount of wishing or wanting will be rid of them. Your actions and your thoughts are different, they are separate. If they weren’t we would be punching everyone who made us angry, or revolting against systems we don’t believe in.