

VIII. UNDERSTANDING EACH OTHER

1. SOCIAL NUMBER THEORY

A. Outside numbers

1. We all “rate” people. Everyone has two “rating” numbers, not just one. One is external, one internal. Both numbers can be put on a stage of 1-10.
2. The outside # represents the person’s social status, and personal appearance based on subjective stereotypes. This number is often determined within the first seven seconds of meeting a person, so it’s before we even get to know the person.
3. The outside # is not decided by what person thinks of self, but by how others rate you.
4. Then you basically brand yourself, and try to improve the number. Our society spends billions of \$’s trying to change the outside number, but it doesn’t work.
5. The outside # distributes itself as a bell-shaped curve. This means that most people are 4 - 7, few are 8 - 10.
6. Each person tends to overrate themselves by a factor of 2 because our society average is low.
7. We think successful date matching requires that the outside numbers be almost the same (so we find gathering in groups to be safer, because it means the #'s don’t have to be right).
8. We all want a bargain, so we add 1 to the number we are looking for (a 5 adds 2 and 1, so looks for an 8). The 5 sees self as a 7, and tries to date a real 8. The 8 rejects because the pursuer is really a 5.
9. We get in trouble because people who are given a 4,5, or 6 won’t date 4,5, or 6. They want to date 7,8,9.

B. Inside numbers

1. The inside # is based on the person’s inner man, tied to their relationship with God, and the resulting growth in Christ-likeness.
 - Humility (confesses sin)
 - Character (perseveres in trials, exhibits self-control over emotional control)
 - Integrity (honest, faithful, steadfast)
 - Sacrificial (considers others more important, serves others)

- Loving (warm, caring)
2. Since everyone is sinful, the inside # tends to be lower. We all start at 1,2,3 when we come out of high school (teenagers are characterized by narcissism and self-centeredness – high-school-ers tend to believe everyone is watching them. The parental ability in our culture to provide care instead of insisting that teens help the family financially has extended the typical time-frame of this characteristic.)
 3. During the transition from dependence on parents to financial independence, it becomes evident as to whether the inside # will grow.
 4. The inside # is not deterministic - it can be changed (outside # can't, but everyone thinks it can). Christianity offers a message of hope, as all Christians have the potential to raise their inside # by growing to look more like disciples of Jesus Christ through the changing power of the Holy Spirit.
 5. Developing spiritual attributes is a growth process that takes time, thus young people with a higher inside number will become the beautiful spouses over time.
 6. A healthy long-term marriage is more correlated with the mates inner #'s than outer #'s.