

THE MEANING OF IDENTITY

The three words I have chosen are words are not only words I use to describe myself, but also words friends have used to describe me. The first word I have chosen is conscientious, it has a few different meanings to me. The first thing that comes to mind is awareness, I believe they both go hand in hand.

The meaning to me is being aware, understanding, compassionate, and being in touch with your surroundings. Also to respect people and except them for who they are, treat and care for places, and things as if they were your own.

The place I use this the most is at my jobs, which are both customer oriented. I deal with different types of people on a daily basis, such as customers and my fellow employees. I also am using other people's equipment and I was always taught to put back someone else's things in better shape than you found them. I also tend to have a sixth sense about what is on someone's mind, and it is not because I have this special power. It is because I am aware of my surrounding's and pick up on little hints. Being conscientious has served me well in all aspects of my life.

I chose this word because it is something I pride myself in as are the other two words. I am a person that likes to sit back in different situations and just watch what is going on around me. I watch people, check out the surroundings and see how it all blends together. I try to find the hidden message in everything around me or find that one gem in the middle of numerous things. Being conscientious means I will not miss anything, there are a lot of unique things out there in the world and if you do try to be conscientious you will miss them.

Trustworthy is another word I chose to describe myself, the only thing I truly own in this life is my word. The meaning to me is backing up what say with what you do, never make a promise you cannot keep. It also means that people can come to you and tell you anything and know it will go no further. They know you are a man of your word and that you stand behind it. The last thing it means to me is people that know that you will be there for them if they need you, no matter

what time it is, where you are at or what reason you need them.

Again the place I use it the most is at my jobs. I deal with sensitive information on a daily basis, in transactions and on the computer. I handle cash and credit cards, I deal with school information and student information. I have seen people drop money, important things, leave items behind and I always go out of my way to make sure they get it back. I have friends that I know things about that no one else knows and it will stay that way. I believe it is up to them to tell people not me.

I picked trustworthy because it was the way I was raised and it is also as I said before a trait I pride myself in. I have been told on numerous occasions that I am too honest, honest to a fault as they say.

I have told the truth on many occasion when it did not benefit me, but if I did not tell the truth it would affect me mentally. Guilt seems to be something I truly dislike and I try to avoid it as much as possible. Trust is a strong word and without it it is almost impossible to sustain success, you may be successful but it will not last. Being untrustworthy will eventually catch up with you.

The last word I have picked is team player. It means that you take the group in as a whole and not just what you contribute. It is the ability to be an individual with your own accomplishments but willing to contribute them to the team for the sake of overall success, instead of individual success. Meaning you are willing to sacrifice individual rewards and stats for the good of the team. Also knowing that being successful as a team is far more gratifying and rewarding, than being a success in an overall failure.

I have been part of a team in some way shape or form most of my life, whether it was sports, a job or school. I learned a long time ago that being a team-player is an important aspect to success in any endeavor. My jobs are both team situation with different parts working together and if one breaks down it affects the team as a whole. Each person has a job to do and in both jobs it requires teamwork for everything to work smoothly and to call the day a success. I work at Start and we have our staff broken up into teams, each team is responsible for a different area. This way we can

always be moving forward and only focused on our teams tasks. What this does is free up a team to look at their part and see where we can improve and move forward.

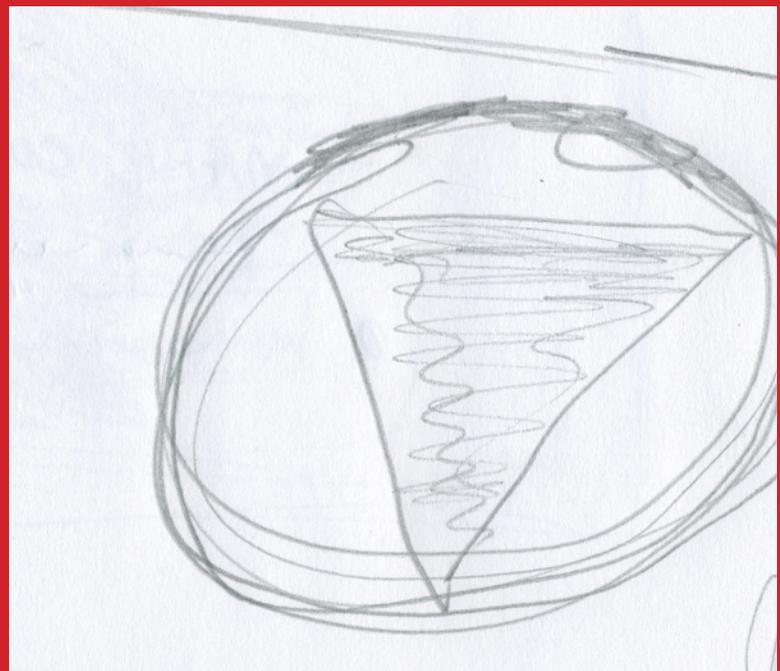
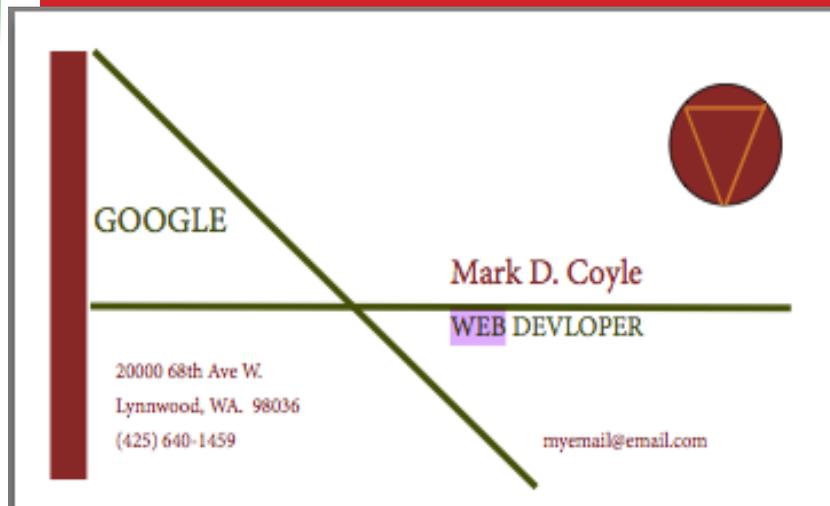
I picked this word because I have been an athlete most of my life and it has taught me very valuable lessons. It taught me how to be a team player and to what is best for the overall success of the team. I was described in my high school year-book as a ultimate team-player. I sacrificed personal glory on many occasions for the sake of the team. I was the leader of most of the teams I played on and jobs I have had and I learned early, that your example sets the standard by which the team plays. If you sacrifice for the good of the team, the rest of the team will follow.

The three words I have chosen are all things I was taught and learned at an early age so they have stuck with me. I believe all three words feed into each other, meaning you cannot have one without the other.

These words have meaning to me because of the way I was raised to live by them. I was raised the old fashioned way, treating people as you want to be treated, if you are going to do something do it 100% or do not do it at all and when you give your word it means something. I still believe in chivalry and have lived my entire life that way and I try to teach others with my words and my actions and I hope people noticed these traits in me.

”If any man should seek greatness,
let him forget greatness, and look for
truth. Then he will find both.”

Laos Tzu



Seeing Ourselves

The event that impacted my life the most was the death of my mother at the age of 16. Her death turned my whole world upside down. She died from her second heart attack on April 23rd 1976. The range of emotions and changes were all over the place from the first attack on December 25th 1975 until her death. It is important to tell you about the time in between the first and second heart attack to understand what this did too me. Up until her first heart attack, I was your typical 16 year old, I talked back, snuck out and had this, "I know everything attitude". That all ended on that day when I first saw my mother after the first attack.

I had been at basketball practice at the time and this is important to note also because of the fact I tried out for the team without my mother's permission. She had told me not to, but I did it anyways and because of the way she raised us, she allowed me to stay on the team. My brothers and I were raised to finish what you start and to always give 100% or do not do it at all. When I first saw her she was begging to die and said she could not take it anymore. She had raised 3 boys on her own and stress had taken its toll. At that moment I started thinking of all the things I had done recently to stress her out. I vowed at that moment to quit sports and get a job to help out and to focus on my school work.

Even my mother told me not to quit anything, along with a bunch of other people. They all knew the best way for me to help my mother was to focus on my sports and get a scholarship to college and to go on from there. I had always been a star football player and that was going to be my ticket to college and maybe even the pros. Then she would never have to work another day in her life. The hospital she was in was across the street from my school. So I got permission to spend my homeroom time and my lunch at the hospital. I did this every day for the 3 months she



was in the hospital. I also went after school and would stay until visiting hours were over.

Also during this time I became the man of the house, because my older brother lived at college. I took care of everything, from my younger brother to cooking, cleaning, shopping and paying the bills. I grew up fast in those 3 months, I started getting better grades (something I did not focus on before, I always did enough to get by and stay eligible for sports), I was more focused than I had ever been. My mother became my whole world and everything I did was to make things easier for her. I did all this because I felt responsible for what happened to her in the first place and I vowed I would never cause her stress again.

She made it home from the hospital and I continued to take the responsibility for the same things I had while she was in the hospital. I was not going to let anything put stress on her. What amazed everyone the most is how well I was doing in school, I was even impressed. I ended up getting ahead in my classes and finish my sophomore year 2 months early and started on my junior classes. During this whole situation my mother and I became very close, she became my best friend and my reason for being so focused. That all changed on April 19th 1975, when she had her second and fatal heart attack. I wanted to spend the night, but my older brother and family friends told me to go home, I did but I was mad I could not stay. The next morning I got up early to go to the hospital and on the way I felt this emptiness inside, I would later find out that it was the same time my mother passed away. When we arrived I knew it was not good, my uncle had arrived overnight, there was a priest from the school, a couple of my coaches and my two

best friends. They knew me well and they knew it was going to hit me the hardest. They shuffled me off to a room and when they told me I tossed the couch over and punched a lamp and the wall. I was angry for two reasons, one I was not there when she died to say good bye and I was pissed at God for taking the most important person in my life away from me. Things were going great why he had to taken her, I saw a bright future for her and myself. That all ended that day, I started to just walk out of the hospital, but they chased me down because they knew I would walk until I could not take another step.

From that day on I became a loner and a very angry young man, things would never be the same. My school work did not suffer but my Teachers, coaches and friends did. My whole attitude changed for the worse. I talked back to teachers and coaches, I had this “no one can tell me what to do attitude”. I hated God and the world, it became my loss though. I lost scholarships and opportunities, I skipped practices, talked back to everyone and just did not seem to care about anything. The hate and anger made me a better football player, but it made me one, no one wanted.

I felt a lot of things, the three top ones were hate, anger, and depression. It took me quite a few years to get a handle on these feelings. What amazed me later in life is how everyone thought I was this strong young man and I did not need to seek help. That was part of my growing process through this. It was a time in my live that defines who I am today.



**“If life gives you lemons.
Make lemonade.”**

Ben Franklin



Song List

1. Hard Way Every Time - Jim Croce
2. Climbing Up The Ladder – Isley Brothers
3. Aint Gonna Hurt Nobody – Brick
4. Beautiful Loser – Bob Seger
5. Don't Worry Bout A Thing – Stevie Wonder
6. Play That Funky Music – Wild Cherry
7. In The Way That You Use It – Eric Clapton
8. Live Every Day – REO Speedwagon
9. Wanderer – Marc Broussard
10. Jerimiah's Prayer – Marc Broussard
11. Tears In Heaven – Eric Clapton
12. Dreams – Van Halen

My Musical Life

All of these songs have a special place in my heart and soul, it was hard just knocking them down to 12. I have a saying that I tend to use as a motto in my life, “No Music. No Life”. The songs I picked have one thing in common, they all motivate me in some form or another.

Two of the songs remind of two special people that have passed away, “Tears in Heaven” makes me think of my Mother. Jerimiah's Prayer came out about the time my friend and former co-worker passed away from cancer.

Two other songs were songs I listened to for 3 years in high school, I listened to them before every football game, to get myself fired up, the songs by Brick and the Isley Brothers. Play That Funky Music was a song my friends in high school use to describe me.



Beautiful Loser has allowed me to be reminded of my life. The Wanderer is my current theme song and how I live my life. All the other songs are ones that help me get motivated when times are tough. Don't Worry Bout a Thing was the first of those songs and helped me through tough times in my teen years. In The Way That you Use It could be a snapshot of my life. The final two songs "Live Every Day" and "Dreams" are high energy songs that get me motivated. One song that is not on the list but sums up how I feel about music and what an important and vital part of my life is "Let the Music Get Down In Your Soul" both the original version and the new version by Marc Broussard that I listen to at least once a week. Music is part of everyone's life and everyone has a song or songs that have some meaning in their lives. Music tends to sooth the soul and put a bounce back in your step. All the songs I have chosen give me a feeling of sadness, joy



and motivation. They all are part of my life and always will be. I have always believed that the music that people listen to, can tell you a lot about the them, basically a gateway to their soul. Some of the songs have been guiding lights in my life, getting me through many of good and bad times. They have helped mold me into to who I am and not just something to listen to or dance to.

Next to sports music is the other love in my life and will continue to be. Music just seems to grab your emotions and takes them all over the place, from love, hate, sadness, joy, and every other emotion. This is a subject dear to my heart and I could go on forever talking and writing about it.

