

# The concepts of "reflective self-monitoring" and "self-objectification" in terms ...

[Experience](#), [Self Reliance](#)



Symbolic Interactionism is a theory that was introduced by George Herbert Mead, an American philosopher. Instead of focusing on the bigger picture, symbolic interactionism likes to focus on the small-scale perspective of the interaction between individuals in groups or with other people. G. H. Mead believed that people change based on their interaction with different people, objects, or events. For example, the way an individual acts with their friends – loud, energetic, natural, etc. – may not be the way an individual acts with their professor, in most cases they try being more serious and professional. George Herbert Mead introduced symbolic interactionism with three major points: actions depend on meanings, different meanings for different people, and meanings can change. Khan Academy used a great example of a tree.

Let's say I have always seen trees as a spot to find some shade on a sunny day, so I perceive the tree as shade; then, there is another individual that whenever they think of tree they just ants and other insect crawling all over the tree, so that individual perceives the tree as itchiness. Now, hypothetically speaking, one day I am sitting under the tree catching some shade and that individual comes up to me and warns me about the ants, but I just shake it off since I have never had a bad experience with a tree. Let's say later that day as I am laying under tree, ants start to crawl on me. I, now, experience a bad moment with a tree, so now when I see a tree I may think how nice it would be to be under the shade, but just the thought of ants again pushes me away from wanting to sit under the tree. Now, since I experience ants, I do not see the tree as a symbol of relaxation, but a symbol of itchiness. Meanings are invariant, they are always changing. Reflective self-monitoring is basically whenever someone feels the need to act or speak

a certain way because of the people they are surrounded with. They watch how everyone else in the group is acting and reflects off of their actions. For example, hypothetically speaking, let's say I met a new friend in a class one day and she invites to go eat out lunch with her and a group of her friends. During lunch, I would probably watch on how they act with one another, so this way I know what they tolerate and they do not. I also check to see if they are more on the quiet side, what they are interested in, what they are not interested in, and many other things like that, so then I am able to act a certain way where they can like me.

Reflective self-monitoring, to me, is fairly similar to Erving Goffman's dramaturgical approach. The dramaturgical approach states that there are two parts to every human: the front stage and the backstage. Front stage is how we present ourselves to everyone, while the backstage is the version of ourselves we only show to those who we feel comfortable with, like love ones.