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Identity, at its core, is the understanding of what someone or something is. This understanding is made up of two integral parts, personal identity and social identity. Personal identity is an understanding of who you are as a person before you step into the role you play in society.  Social identity is made up of the labels projected onto a person based on how society views someone's personal identity. People's personal identity can be shaped in many different ways.  Three factors that are important in shaping one's personal identity include, but are not limited to, their culture, their memories, and their societal labels. Culture, simply explained, is learned behavior and norms we apply to the situations that we are presented.  In the words of the

**World Youth Alliance**, which is a non-profit organization whose main goal is to create a culture that supports the dignity of every human person, "We are not alone. We live in a society, as wild as it is. We live in groups, we define ourselves through them, and hence, at least in some aspects, we belong to them." These groups that we live in are the cultures we create for ourselves. We do this to build social connections, which allow people to feel accepted by the general population. It is a human need to feel accepted by other people, so it is only natural for a person to gravitate to a group that is made of members that reflect their own characteristics. Memories are almost as important in shaping a person's identity as their culture. While culture is large and vast, memories are personal and very connected to what we do and say. Memories impact our identity by teaching us how to interact with the world around us. According to "Psychology Today", "These memories represent ongoing themes that we play out over and over again in our lives." They create our moral code through repetition, providing positive reinforcement for good behavior and negative consequences for bad behavior. An

obvious example of this concept is evident in childhood. When you were a kid, if you did something wrong, you got punished. The punishment, from that point on, was always connected to that bad behavior, which, hopefully, prevented you from repeating the action. This process slowly developed our idea of what is deemed good and what is deemed bad.  A person's idea of what is good versus bad, what is ethical versus unethical, is largely developed through memories and plays a huge role in creating our personal identity. If you did not have the memories that make up your moral code, or ethos, then you would not interact with the outside world in the same way. Societal labels is the third factor in shaping personal identity, and is more important, but vastly different than, culture and memories. Both culture and memories are very personal, and are unaffected by other people's views and experiences. Societal labels, on the contrary, are based solely on other people's judgements. How other people perceive a person largely impacts how they perceive themselves.  It is similar to culture in the way that we look to other people for acceptance, and place so much value on their opinions.

These labels, whether positive or negative, have a vitally important impact on shaping a person's personal identity. Overall, many factors play a role in creating one's personal identity. A person's culture, memories, and societal labels are just three of the many things that manifests themselves into your personality and how others see you. Social identity is how other people perceive you, regardless of your personal identity. It is different than personal identity because it is based on societal expectations, which you do not have control over. Unfortunately, one can do very little to change their social identity, because it has nothing to do with who you are as a person, or what your belief system is. Unlike societal labels, which you absorb and may become part of your personal identity, your social identity is completely independent of your personal ethos. In other words, it is basically when people judge a book by its cover.

Thus, Personal and social identities are intertwined constantly, changing as people learn and grow.