

## THE PERSONAL POMO PROFILE

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*The Personal Pomo Profile* is an informal self-evaluation questionnaire designed to help you understand the relative influence of postmodern culture on your life. For best results, fill out the questionnaire *before* reading any of the supporting material at the end of this document.

The survey itself was adapted from Sherwood G. Lingenfelter and Marvin K. Mayers (*Ministering Cross-Culturally*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1986, 27-36) by the participants of PTH 969 *Communicating with Postmoderns*, a Doctor of Ministry elective course taught at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Springfield, Missouri, USA, October 2001, by Earl G. Creps, Ph.D. [ecreps@agseminary.edu](mailto:ecreps@agseminary.edu) [[www.agts.edu](http://www.agts.edu)] 1-800-467-AGTS.

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### PPP Instructions

1. Fill out the questionnaire following the instructions.
  2. Record your scores in the Scoring Grid and calculate your averages.
  3. Plot your average scores on the six "Dimensions of Personal Postmodernity."
  4. Read the section on "Your Personal Pomo Profile."
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### Questionnaire

Read the following statements quickly and make a judgment about the extent to which they reflect your thinking. Write your score in the blank provided according to whether the scale...

...does *not* describe me at all = 1

...describes me *somewhat* = 4

...is *very* descriptive of me = 7

Write the number 2 or 3 for statements that are *less* descriptive of you and the numbers 4 or 5 for the statements that are *more* descriptive. Make sure to write in a score for every item using the numbers 1-7.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. When I'm sick I would be unlikely to go to others for help and support.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. I need all the facts before I make a decision.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. In most situations there is only one appropriate way to act.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. I would steal to feed my family.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I am greatly concerned about what the future will look like for my friends and me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Mother Teresa is a better model of Christianity than Billy Graham.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I do not want to know the flaws of those I consider spiritual leaders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. How I feel about something determines whether it is right or wrong for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. I insist on being considered as an individual rather than as a member of a group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A person who is sincerely seeking to understand God knows more about faith than most religious leaders.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I am not worried about my future and/or the future of those around me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I would much rather win a team championship than an individual award.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The diversity of cultures in the world is one of the very best things about the human race.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I would confess to a crime I did not commit if it would keep me out of a sure prison sentence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Bad tippers should not say grace in restaurants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I would refuse a promotion if it meant losing friends.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. If there is a conflict between my head and my heart, I choose my heart.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. I would tell the truth even if it made a friend uncomfortable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. When I have to make a decision, I am confident that things will work out.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I would have trouble calling a spiritual leader by her or his first name.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. If I won the lottery I would keep all the winnings for myself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I am willing to change my mind when confronted with superior logic or evidence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I believe that if international political and religious leaders work together the world can know peace and unity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. When facing decisions, I seek the counsel of friends and family, because I tend to worry about the outcome.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I am confident that things will work out in the end, even if my significant relationships are not perfect.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I am not quick to let others know who I really am inside.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. I respond to situations intuitively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I could learn very important lessons from virtually every culture on earth.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. The political and religious problems of the world will continue to deteriorate harmony and peace.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. I would rather lie than risk being ostracized.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. When I am in a meaningful relationship, I am always wondering when it's going to end.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. Two theologians with different opinions cannot both be right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I generally feel comfortable enough to share my struggles with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I would marry outside my ethnicity if I loved the person enough.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. The differences between cultures reveal that some are superior to others as a way of life
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. Certain practices can be right in one setting and wrong in another.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. Multiple interpretations of a spiritual principle can be true simultaneously.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. There is a grand design to the universe that can be known.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. Every world religion has sacred writings that reflect God's thoughts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. The Bible is God's only written revelation to the human race.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I'm willing to commit to something once I understand it fully.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I believe in things I can't fully explain with facts or reasoning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. My political opinions tend to very independent from those of my friends or family
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. On a day off I would rather go on a picnic with friends than read a book by myself

- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I intend to "be myself" no matter what situation I am in.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. In any situation the most important thing is to know the proper way to act.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. I will never understand God, and am unsure about God's love for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I don't fully understand God, but I believe in God's love for me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. I dread the idea of going on a vacation alone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. I am comfortable making career decisions without consulting my parents or peers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I am drawn to things I cannot explain.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. Lying is always wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. I am likely to vote for political candidates from more than one party affiliation in the same election.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. I feel uncomfortable talking about ethical gray zones.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. I enjoy combining different styles of clothing in the same outfit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. The culture in which I grew up represents the right way for people to live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. Always remaining true to the values we learn from our families is extremely important.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. The idea that there is only one way to reach or know God is absurd.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. I never let emotions keep me from making the right decision.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. There is more truth in science than in art.

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### ***Scoring Grid***

To determine the extent of your postmodernity, fill in below your responses to each of the statements in the questionnaire. For example, if your response to item #1 was 6, enter 6 in the space after "Inauthentic self." When all your scores are entered, add the five numbers in each row and divide the total by five to obtain your Average score for each trait.

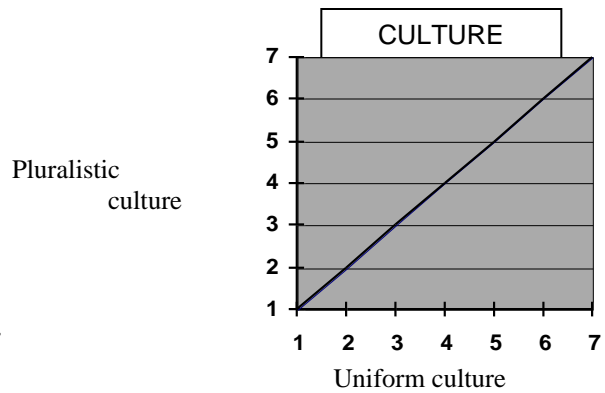
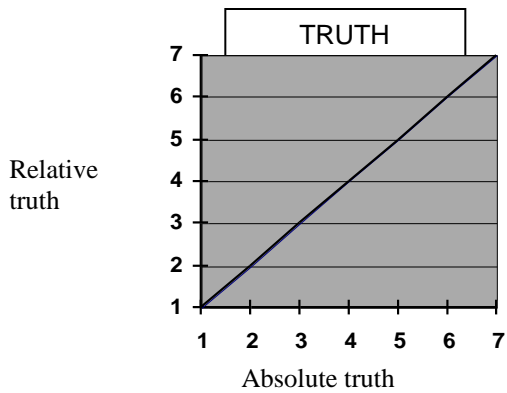
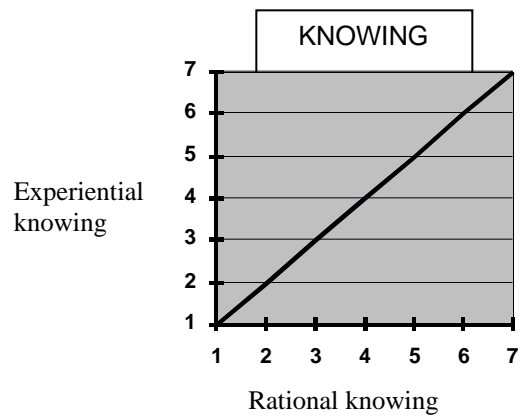
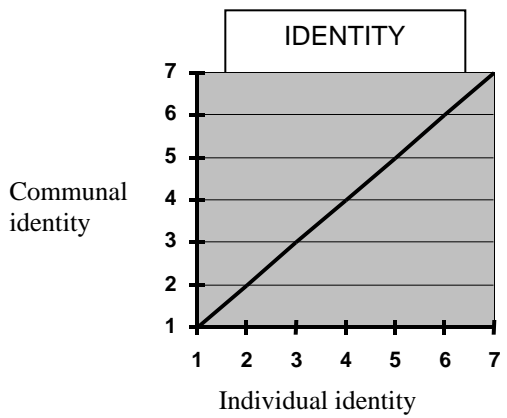
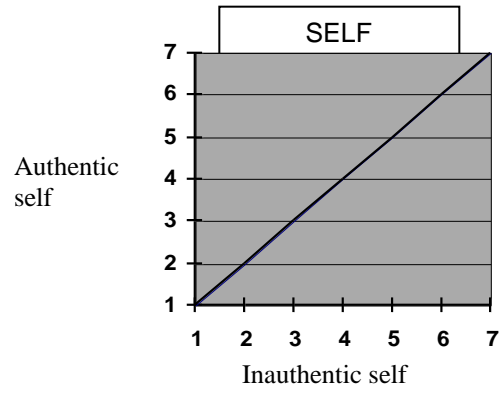
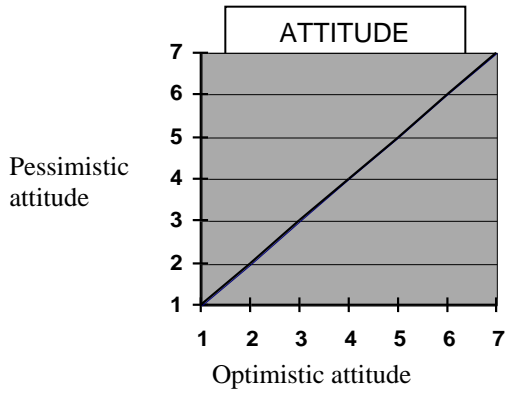
<b>DIMENSIONS:</b>						<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>AVG.</b>
1. Optimistic attitude	<u>11</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>48</u>		
2. Pessimistic attitude	<u>5</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>47</u>		
3. Authentic self	<u>6</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>45</u>		
4. Inauthentic self	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>46</u>		
5. Communal identity	<u>49</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>44</u>		
6. Individual identity	<u>50</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>43</u>		
7. Experiential knowing	<u>8</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>42</u>		
8. Rational knowing	<u>2</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>41</u>		
9. Absolute truth	<u>52</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>32</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>38</u>		
10. Relative truth	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>37</u>		
11. Uniform culture	<u>3</u>	<u>56</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>40</u>		
12. Pluralistic culture	<u>55</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>10</u>		

### *Dimensions of Personal Postmodernity*

Find on each axis your average score for that orientation. Then plot on each grid the point where the two average scores intersect. This point indicates your basic tendency.

The personal profile of basic traits is an approximate representation of the influence of postmodern culture on an individual's attitudes and actions. It will prove useful to compare the individual's profile with that of others. The matrix form presents the contrasting traits as concurrent forces pulling in different (but not necessarily opposite) directions. The scores on each matrix indicate the relative strength of each particular trait as one makes decisions and interacts with others.

For example, a score of (2,6) on the first grid (i.e., optimism has a priority rating of 2, pessimism a rating of 6) suggests that the constraints of pessimism exert a far stronger pull on the decisions and actions of the individual than does an attitude of optimism. A score of (2,2) probably means that neither trait is exerting a strong influence.



### ***Your Personal Pomo Profile***

Thomas Guarino summarizes postmodernism this way:

*"In brief, postmodernism is that type of thought that rebels against any totalizing understanding of reality....Postmodernism has become a militant protest and call to arms against universalizing tendencies."* [Thomas Guarino, "Postmodernity and Five Fundamental Theological Issues," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996), 654, 655.]

Taking the philosophy (postmodernism) and the culture (postmodernity) as a whole your Pomo Profile touches on six dimensions, presented as contrasting (but not necessarily opposite) traits that are at work concurrently pulling in different, but not necessarily opposite directions.

1. **ATTITUDE: OPTIMISM/PESSIMISM.** Postmodernity leans strongly toward *pessimism*, regarding *optimism* as a naïve feature of modernism's Enlightenment Project.
2. **SELF: AUTHENTIC/INAUTHENTIC.** Modernists in North America play *inauthentic* pre-determined roles (father, professor, evangelical), while postmoderns relish levels of self-disclosure that display the courage to be *authentic*—no matter what.
3. **IDENTITY: COMMUNAL/INDIVIDUAL.** Modernism was committed to the exalted *individual* as the arbiter of all things, while postmoderns look to their immediate *community* (their tribe) as the ground of truth and being.
4. **KNOWING: EXPERIENTIAL/RATIONAL.** Postmoderns "think with their feelings," while modernists trust the scientific method, the laws of logic, and their powers of observation and reasoning.
5. **TRUTH: ABSOLUTE/RELATIVE.** For modernists some truth is absolute in the sense that it's really "out there" and can be discovered by a reasonable observer; postmoderns have no faith in external "facts" or rigorous observation, seeing "truth" as constructed by observers and thus *relative* by definition.
6. **CULTURE: UNIFORMITY/PLURALISM.** Postmoderns prize diversity in virtually everything, especially in the form of spiritual and cultural *pluralism*; modernists tend toward an either/or worldview that searches for a more *uniform*, "best practices" approach to everything.

The Personal Pomo Profile can be applied in several ways: (1) it can serve as an instructional tool, providing a starting point for learning about postmodern philosophy and the culture of postmodernity; (2) it can be the basis for self-understanding, making us aware of the influence of postmodernism on ourselves; (3) it can serve as an insight which will help us achieve maximum intelligent interaction with others using a cross-cultural perspective on communication.

For many additional sources on postmodernism see my, *Emerging Culture/Emerging Church: A Select Resource List*. Available online and in a free, downloadable pdf format at:

[http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty\\_publications/bibliographies/creps\\_bibliography/index.html](http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/bibliographies/creps_bibliography/index.html)