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Dear future me: behavioral and neural mechanisms underlying self-concept development in relation to educational decision-making in adolescence

Aar, L.P.E. van der

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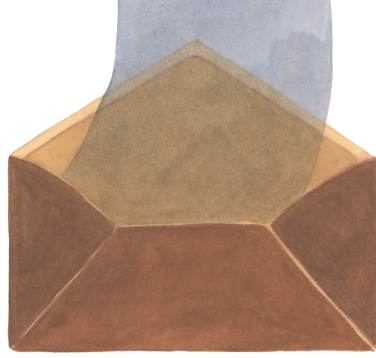


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Author: Aar, L.P.E. van der

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Propositions

Accompanying the public defense of Laura van der Aar's dissertation

Dear Future me

on June 15, 2021

1. Adolescence is an important period for self-concept development that is characterized by an increased sensitivity to the social environment (*this thesis*).
2. Different aspects of self-concept take on different roles within the context of future educational decision-making (*this thesis*).
3. Adolescents who struggle with making suitable future-oriented educational choices are characterized by low self-esteem and self-concept clarity (*this thesis*).
4. Neural responses during self-evaluation are related to individual differences in self-positivity (*this thesis*).
5. The positivity and clarity of self-concept can be improved through training that takes place within a gap year context (*this thesis*).
6. Individual differences in changes in self-concept clarity and social self-evaluations, but not self-esteem, positively predict outcomes related to future-oriented educational choices (*this thesis*).
7. High schools should devote more attention to self-concept development in order to increase the possibilities for adolescents to find a major that fits their interests, abilities and goals.
8. The current Dutch educational system allows for too little flexibility to explore and reconsider options. Adolescents should be given the opportunity to fail.
9. Nothing in science has any value to society if it is not communicated (Anne Roe). Outreach should play a more prominent role within the scientific process.
10. The existing way of evaluating a PhD trajectory is too one-sided. A successful PhD is more than scientific output.
11. In science and in life, doubt can only be removed by action (Johann Wolfgang von Goethe).