NO PREP

Self-Esteem and Self-Image

Building Confidence in a Social World

Includes: Student reading, case study, differentiated questions, teacher key

Name: Period: Date:

Self-Esteem and Self-Image: Building Confidence in a Social World

Defining Self-Esteem and Self-Image

Self-esteem refers to how much value you place on yourself as a person. It's about whether you feel worthy, capable, and deserving of happiness. Self-image, on the other hand, is how you see yourself in terms of appearance, abilities, and personality. Teens often confuse the two, but while self-esteem looks at your overall sense of worth, self-image focuses on the mental picture you have of yourself. In many cases, these

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Influences of Social Media, Peers, and Family

Social media platforms can dramatically affect how teens perceive themselves. Seeing filtered photos of friends or influencers living seemingly glamorous lives can trigger unrealistic comparisons. If your feed is filled with people who appear flawless, you might feel inadequate or believe you're failing if you're not matching that same level of perfection. But keep in mind that social media often highlights only the best, most curated moments. Likes and comments can also play into self-

worth, making some teens feel validated only when they receive a high number of reactions. Peers and family members also have a big impact. Casual remarks (even if said in jest) about someone's weight, clothes, or academic performance can linger in a teen's mind. Similarly, enthusiastic support and positive feedback from friends or family can boost self-esteem and build a healthier self-image. It's important to remember that everyone experiences setbacks and imperfections. A trusted friend who points out your unique talents or a family member who encourages you to pursue your passions can strengthen your self-image.

Practical Tips for Building Confidence and Self-Acceptance

One of the first steps to improve self-esteem is to identify negative thought patterns. Are you quick to dismiss compliments or dwell on criticism? Challenging these thoughts can help reframe how you see yourself. For instance, if you catch yourself thinking, "I'm bad at everything," you might challenge that with evidence of something you've done well, like a school project or a supportive gesture toward a friend. Over time, these little mindset shifts can accumulate into a more positive self-view. Additionally, focusing on activities that you find genuinely rewarding (whether it's painting, playing a musical instrument, or practicing a sport) helps build a sense of competence. Setting small, achievable goals in these areas can provide tangible proof of your abilities. Each success story, no matter how small, reinforces the idea that you are capable. Don't underestimate the power of self-care routines either: adequate rest, balanced nutrition, and regular exercise can help regulate mood and maintain a healthier outlook on life.

Low Self-Esteem and Its Impact on Mental Health

Chronic low self-esteem can contribute to anxiety, depression, or feelings of hopelessness. A teen who believes they're fundamentally not good enough might withdraw from social events, avoid trying new things, or even neglect schoolwork because they assume they'll fail anyway. Over time, this can create a cycle where fear of failure leads to inaction, which then reinforces negative self-beliefs. Breaking this cycle often requires a combination of self-reflection, professional help, and supportive environments. Conversely, healthy self-esteem acts like a protective buffer against life's inevitable ups and downs. Rejections, disappointments, and conflicts still hurt, but they don't define who you are. With a healthy mindset, teens can bounce back from setbacks, learn from mistakes, and

remain motivated to move forward. Understanding the impact of self-esteem on mental health is a critical step in recognizing how important it is to nurture a balanced self-image throughout your teen years.

Key Information: Key Points Snapshot

Concept	Takeaway
Self-Esteem	Overall sense of personal worth and value
Self-Image	Mental picture you hold of your physical and internal qualities
Social Media Influence	Comparison with curated images can distort perception of reality
Peer and Family Support	Encouragement can foster resilience and confidence
Low Self-Esteem Risks	May lead to depression, anxiety, and avoidance of challenges

Case Study Excerpt

Dominic was a sophomore who loved playing the guitar, but he rarely performed in front of anyone. Despite countless hours of practice, he believed he wasn't "good enough." One day, his music teacher asked him to showcase his skills at a small recital. Dominic initially refused, picturing a crowd that would judge every missed note. After talking with a few friends who reminded him of all the positive feedback they'd given when he played privately, Dominic decided to take a risk and participate. During the recital, Dominic missed a couple of chords. He felt a wave of panic, sure that he'd ruined everything. However, the applause and smiles from the audience surprised him. His teacher praised the emotional quality of his performance, emphasizing that tiny mistakes are normal. Realizing he'd let his fear of imperfection overshadow the joy of sharing music, Dominic began to see that his self-image was skewed. By confronting his doubts, he discovered that confidence grows when you allow yourself to be seen, flaws and all.

1. What belief did Dominic hold that made him nervous about performing publicly?

_____

_____

2. How did Dominic's friends and teacher affect his perception of his own abilities?

_____

_____

Multiple Choice

1. Self-esteem is best described as:

    a) How you feel about your physical appearance only

    b) Something that never changes once you reach your teen years

    c) Your overall sense of personal worth

    d) A guaranteed way to be popular

2. One negative effect of social media on self-image is:

    a) Providing too many positive comments

    b) Banning personal photos from platforms

    c) Showing real-life moments in an unfiltered way that builds confidence

    d) Reinforcing unrealistic comparisons due to curated posts

3. Low self-esteem can contribute to:

    a) Avoidance of challenges due to fear of failure

    b) A reduced likelihood of experiencing any anxiety at all

    c) A permanent inability to ever succeed

    d) Better interpersonal relationships

Matching

Write the letter of the correct definition on the line next to each term.

Term	Definition
1. ___ Self-Image	A) Constructive or negative pressures from people of the same age group
2. ___ Comparison Trap	B) The picture a person holds of their appearance and abilities
3. ___ Peer Influence	C) Focusing on others' curated successes and feeling inadequate
4. ___ Resilience	D) A sense of unease or worry that can stem from low self-esteem
5. ___ Anxiety	E) Helps individuals bounce back after setbacks

Fill-in-the-Blank

1. Feeling good about your overall self-worth is known as having healthy _____.

2. When we fear judgment, we often avoid situations that could help us build _____.

3. A realistic self-image includes recognizing both strengths and _____.

Short Answer

Answer each question in 2-4 complete sentences.

1. Why do you think small accomplishments can have a big impact on a teen's self-esteem?

_____

_____

_____

2. How might a trusted mentor or teacher help a student with low self-image?

3. What is one strategy a teen can use to maintain a healthy perspective on social media?