

Teen Self-Esteem Workbook

**Facilitator Reproducible
Self-Assessments, Exercises
& Educational Handouts**

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Facilitator Reproducible Self-Assessments,
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Using This Book *(For the professional)*

To be able to reach personal and professional goals, self-esteem is critical. For teens, healthy self-esteem is even more critical, both emotionally and physically. Self-esteem dictates how teens treat and feel about themselves and others, assert themselves, view and act in the world, and take care of their basic needs. Research suggests that low self-esteem can be tied to many mental and physical health issues:

- Aches and pains
- Alcohol abuse
- Angry outbursts
- Anxiety
- Bullying issues
(victim, bully, bystander)
- Depression
- Drug use
- Eating disorders
- Fatigue
- Loneliness
- Poor school/work performance
- Relationships
- Stress
- Unhealthy eating

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* is designed to help teens engage in self-reflection, examine their thoughts and feelings that either enhance or detract from healthy self-esteem, and learn effective tools and techniques for building positive feelings of self-esteem and self-worth. This book combines three powerful psychological tools for the management of aggressive thoughts, feelings and behaviors: self-assessment, journaling and role-playing. All to enhance empathy and allow teens to practice self-esteem building strategies.

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* contains five separate sections that will guide the participants toward learning more about themselves and how their self-esteem impacts them.

Teen Self-Esteem Scale helps teens explore their perceptions of themselves and feelings about themselves.

Teen Self-Worth Scale helps teens explore the extent to which they view themselves as valuable and worthy human beings.

Teen Self-Understanding Scale helps teens explore how aware they are of their personal characteristics and attitudes.

Teen Self-Responsibility Scale helps teens explore how much responsibility they assume for what happens in their lives.

Teen Assertiveness Scale helps teens explore how assertive they are in their asking for what they want and need.

Bonus: Enrichment Activities in this section.

(Continued on the next page)

Using This Book *(For the professional, continued)*

Additional Factors

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* deals with many different aspects of self-esteem, including self-worth, self-responsibility, self-awareness, and assertive behavior. Self-esteem is a person's overall evaluation of self-worth and encompasses a person's emotions, thoughts and ways of behaving. For people to make effective decisions and efficiently solve problems, they must have healthy self-esteem. Teens with healthy self-esteem are likely not to simply "follow the crowd," but rather to trust themselves to make decisions that are in their best interest.

Prior to beginning each section, you may want to use the educational handouts toward the end of the section, as an introduction or review for yourself and/or the students.

Use Codes for Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a term for any action that preserves the privacy of people. Because teens completing the activities in this workbook might be asked to answer assessment items and to journal about and explore their relationships, you will need to discuss confidentiality before you begin using the materials in this workbook. Maintaining confidentiality is important as it shows respect for others and allows participants to explore their feelings without hurting anyone's feelings or fearing gossip, harm or retribution.

In order to maintain confidentiality, explain to the participants that they need to assign a code name for each person they write about as they complete the various activities in the workbook. For example, a friend named Joey who enjoys going to hockey games might be titled JLHG (Joey Loves Hockey Games) for a particular exercise. In order to protect their friends' identities, they should not use people's actual names or initials – just codes.

Layout of the Book

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* is designed to be used either independently or as part of an integrated curriculum. You may administer one of the assessments and the journaling exercises to an individual or a group with whom you are working, or you may administer a number of the assessments over one or more days.

Reproducible Pages in the First Five Sections:

- ❑ **Assessment Instruments** – Self-assessment inventories with scoring directions and interpretation materials offer group facilitators to choose one or more of the activities relevant to their participants.
- ❑ **Activity Handouts** – Practical questions and activities that prompt self-reflection and promote self-understanding, foster introspection and promote pro-social behaviors.
- ❑ **Quotations** – Quotations in each section provide insight and promote reflection. Participants will be asked to select one or more of the quotations and journal about what the quotations mean to them.
- ❑ **Reflective Questions for Journaling** – Self-exploration activities and journaling exercises specific to each assessment will enhance self-discovery, learning, and healing.
- ❑ **Educational Handouts** – Handouts designed to enhance instruction can be used individually or in groups to promote an understanding of the participants self-esteem, and tools and techniques for enhancing self-esteem.

These pages can be distributed, scanned and converted into masters for overheads or transparencies, projected or written on boards and/or discussed.

Who Should Use This Program?

This book has been designed as a practical tool for helping professionals, such as therapists, counselors, psychologists, teachers, group leaders, etc. Depending on the role of the professional using the *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* and the specific group's needs, these sections can be used individually or combined for a more comprehensive approach.

Why Use Self-Assessments?

- Self-assessments are important in helping teens develop a healthy self-esteem. Participants engage in these ways to explore personal elements of self-esteem:
- Become aware of the primary motivators that guide their behavior
- Explore and learn to “let go” of troublesome habits and behavioral patterns learned in childhood
- Explore the effects of unconscious childhood messages
- Gain insight and “a wake-up call” for behavioral change
- Focus thinking on behavioral goals for change
- Uncover resources they possess that can help them to cope better with problems and difficult choices
- Explore personal characteristics without judgment
- Develop awareness of personal strengths and weaknesses

Because the assessments are presented in a straightforward and easy-to-use format, individuals can self-administer, score and interpret each assessment at their own pace.

About the Assessments, Journaling Activities and Educational Handouts

Materials in the Assessments, Journaling Activities, and Educational Handouts sections in this book are reproducible and can be photocopied for participants' use. Assessments contained in this book focus on self-reported data and thus are similar to ones used by psychologists, counselors, therapists and career consultants. The accuracy and usefulness of the information provided is dependent on the truthful information that each participant provides. By being honest, participants help themselves to learn about unproductive and ineffective patterns in their lives, and to uncover information that might be keeping them from being as happy or as successful as they might be.

An assessment instrument can provide participants with valuable information about themselves; however, these assessments cannot measure or identify everything. The assessments' purpose is not to pigeonhole certain characteristics, but rather to allow participants to explore all of their characteristics. This book contains self-assessments, not tests. Tests measure knowledge or whether something is right or wrong. For the assessments in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. These assessments ask for personal opinions or attitudes about a topic of importance in the participant's life.

When administering the assessments in this workbook, remember that even though the items are generically written so that they will be applicable to a wide variety of people, all items will not account for every possible variable for every person. No assessments are specifically tailored to one person, so use the assessments to help participants identify negative themes in their lives and to find ways to break the hold of these patterns and their effects.

Advise teen participants taking the assessments that they should not spend too much time trying to analyze the content of the questions; they should think about the questions in general and then spontaneously report how they feel about each one. Whatever the results of the assessment, encourage participants to talk about their findings and their feelings pertaining to what they have discovered about themselves. Talking about issues such as body image and self-worth can be therapeutic and beneficial.

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* sections serve as an avenue for individual self-reflection, as well as group experiences revolving around identified topics of importance. Each assessment includes directions for easy administration, scoring and interpretation. In addition, each section includes exploratory activities, reflective journaling activities, insightful quotations and educational handouts to help participants to discover the extent of their self-esteem, explore their habitual, ineffective ways of viewing themselves, and to define new ways to build a healthy sense of self.

(Continued on the next page)

About the Assessments, Journaling Activities and Educational Handouts *(Continued)*

The art of self-reflection goes back many centuries and is rooted in many of the world's greatest spiritual and philosophical traditions. Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, was known to walk the streets engaging the people he met in philosophical reflection and dialogue. He felt that this type of activity was so important in life that he proclaimed, "The unexamined life is not worth living!" The unexamined life is one in which the same routine is continually repeated without ever thinking about its meaning to one's life and how this life really could be lived. However, a structured reflection and examination of beliefs, assumptions, characteristics and patterns can provide a better understanding which can lead to a more satisfying life and career. A greater level of self-understanding about important life skills is often necessary to make positive, self-directed changes in the negative patterns that keep repeating throughout life. The assessments and exercises in this book can help promote this self-understanding. Through involvement with the in-depth activities, each participant claims ownership in the development of positive patterns.

Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for enhancing self-discovery, learning, transcending traditional problems, breaking ineffective life and career habits, and helping people to heal from psychological traumas of the past. From a physical point of view, writing reduces stress and lowers muscle tension, blood pressure and heart rate levels. Psychologically, writing reduces feelings of sadness, depression and general anxiety, and it leads to a greater level of life satisfaction and optimism. Behaviorally, writing leads to enhanced social skills, emotional intelligence and creativity.

By combining reflective assessment and journaling, your participants will engage in a powerful method to see and accept themselves for who they are, achieve inner strength, and take action to begin viewing themselves more positively.

Thanks to the following professionals for their valuable input in the production of this book.

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For the Facilitator – Enrichment Activities

by Carol Butler, MS Ed, RN, C

Apples and Oranges Questions

Thinking about apples and oranges can help you to avoid comparing yourself with others in your dating relationships, friendships, family, and at school and work. To become all that *you* can be, focus on your *uniqueness*.

Consider apples and oranges: both are fruits, yet different in color, taste, texture, and nutrients. If an orange tried to be an apple by painting itself red, no one would be fooled and the superficial change would not affect the inside. Even within each fruit are different varieties such as McIntosh, Delicious and others.

What do apples and oranges have to do with self-esteem? Much misery is caused by thinking we don't "measure up." The following questions illustrate the futility of comparisons.

1. Name two well-known singers, both popular, but very different.

2. Name two popular actors, both talented, but in different ways.

3. Name two great athletes, both strong, but in different sports.

4. Name two musicians or musical groups, both successful, but in different types of music.

5. Consider artists, cartoonists, prose and poetry writers and journalists/TV reporters. Name two who are gifted, but in different ways.

(Continued on the next page)

For the Facilitator – Enrichment Activities *(Continued)*

Sometimes comparisons are made by *other people*: parents, teachers, friends, coaches and dating friends.

Tell about a time when you were compared to someone and describe how you felt in the following situations:

1. A parent compared you to a sibling

2. A teacher compared you to a sibling or another student

3. A friend compared you to another friend

4. A coach or Physical Education teacher compared you to someone else

5. A person you dated compared you to someone else

(Continued on the next page)

For the Facilitator – Enrichment Activities *(Continued)*

Describe someone to whom *you* have compared *yourself* and describe how you felt in these situations.

1. In your family _____

2. At school _____

3. In a friendship _____

4. In a dating relationship _____

5. At work _____

Consider this situation:

In a dating relationship the guy gawks at a body in a bikini, and his girlfriend is overweight, (or the girl gawks at a muscular man, and her boyfriend is very thin). What would *your* reactions be depending on *your* level of esteem, if your dating friend was the gawker?

Low Esteem Thoughts

High Esteem Thoughts

Low Esteem Feelings

High Esteem Feelings

Low Esteem Actions

High Esteem Actions

Low Esteem Effects on the Relationship

High Esteem Effects on the Relationship

(Continued on the next page)

For the Facilitator – Enrichment Activities *(Continued)*

The responses below are examples of how some people might have answered the situation, but your answers are best for you because they reflect your personal point of view!

Low Esteem Thoughts: *He thinks I'm fat. She thinks I'm wimpy. I'll be dumped!*

Low Esteem Feelings: *ugly, not good enough, fearful of loss, mad, sad*

Low Esteem Actions: *withdraw with body language, give the silent treatment, make sarcastic remarks, act clingy or domineering, argue, cry, and/or yell*

Low Esteem Effects on the Relationship: *the day at the beach is ruined; eventually the gawker may break up with the date because insecurity is unattractive, or the dating friend may break up with the gawker because of imagining that the gawker no longer cares.*

High Esteem Thoughts: *The person does have a nice body, but I have other attractive qualities, and my date is not with me for my body.*

High Esteem Feelings: *acceptance of own body type, awareness of own attributes*

High Esteem Actions: *Ignore the moment, eat healthy foods and exercise IF being more physically fit is important to me, Tell the gawker, "Please stop."*

High Esteem Effects on the Relationship: *a great day at the beach; if the gawker's behavior continues, the date may decide the relationship is unhealthy and break up because the gawker is too focused on superficial appearance; the date may decide to dump the gawker and find another dating friend who de-emphasizes body build and appreciates more important qualities*

Think about someone who has a quality you truly admire. _____

What can you do to improve yourself in that area? _____

What can you do to improve your different, equally valuable strengths?

What are you now doing to become all that you can be?

Give an example of a situation you are experiencing now, or anticipate in the near future, where you may be tempted to compare yourself with another person.

How will awareness of your individuality help you to avoid comparisons using the "Apples and Oranges" concept.

(Continued on the next page)

For the Facilitator – Enrichment Activities *(Continued)*

Respond to the five quotations from *Desiderata* by Max Ehrmann.

1. *“If you compare yourself with others, you will become bitter or vain, for there will always be greater and lesser persons than yourself.”*

Tell about hanging out with or comparing yourself to someone you perceived to have less (looks, talent, intelligence, etc.) so that you could feel superior.

Do you believe there will always be greater and lesser *persons* than you, or there will always be people with *greater skills* in some ways and *lesser abilities* in other ways?

2. *“Be yourself.”*

3. *“Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.”*

4. *“But do not distress yourself with imaginings.”*
Explain how *comparisons* resemble imaginings.

5. *“Whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep pace with your soul.”*

Introduction for the Participant

Healthy self-esteem is essential for survival and life success. A significant connection between self-esteem and overall life satisfaction is evident. People with healthy self-esteem seem to enjoy life to the fullest, make effective choices to get what they want, connect easily with other people in their lives, trust other people more, and feel at ease expressing emotions and opinions. They are less troubled by inner problems, less affected by the criticism of others, and more adept at finding ways to achieve their full potential. Unhealthy self-esteem can show itself in a variety of ways. Some people with low self-esteem find it difficult to have healthy relationships with others; sometimes they feel depressed, anxious and possibly even worthless.

Self-esteem is your assessment of your personal worth as a human being, and it is largely based on your approval of yourself and the approval of others around you. Because self-esteem is a combination of many traits and attitudes you have about yourself, it can be a challenge to change. Nonetheless, people can change and are able to boost their self-esteem! It happens all the time! You can work to eliminate the causes of low self-esteem and to create a healthy sense of self-esteem.

Self-esteem tends to be a fairly stable quality, but it can swing one way or another based on your relationships, your critical inner thoughts, and the feelings you have about yourself. It's your choice. You can directly build and nourish healthy aspects of your self-esteem and adapt in positive ways to difficult challenges as they occur throughout your life.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The *Teen Self-Esteem Workbook* is designed to provide you with a step-by-step plan to help you build a realistic, healthy, positive sense of self. This approach requires that you learn about yourself by journaling your thoughts and feelings and by practicing the skills that are being taught in this workbook. Therefore, you will be asked to respond to assessments and exercises, and to journal about some experiences in your relationships.

Everyone has the right to confidentiality, and you must honor the right of other people's privacy. Think about it this way – you would not want someone writing things about you that other people could read. Your friends probably feel the same way. In order to maintain the confidentiality of your friends, assign people code names based on things you know about them. For example, a friend named Sherry who loves to wear purple might be coded as *SWP* (Sherry Wears Purple). Do not use any person's actual name when you are listing people.

Teen Self-Esteem Workbook

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I am Proud of Me

Finish these sentence starters about what you are most proud of in your life.

My successes at school _____

With my creative powers _____

In my spare time I achieve _____

In athletics I have accomplished _____

In my community I have _____

As a volunteer I have I been responsible for _____

To earn money, I _____

To help the environment, I _____

For my neighbors, I have _____

Other _____
