

Session 2: Self Esteem

As human beings, we tend to go through life evaluating ourselves and others according to a scale of worth. The concept of self-esteem is the amount of value that we consider we are worth. These values vary from person to person and whilst some may rate themselves as having little value, others may rate their value much higher.

A person's self-esteem is affected by how an individual views themselves. These include attitudes and beliefs a person has towards themselves e.g. "I am good at sport" or, "I am bad at sport". As children develop, the way that others respond to them play a key part in developing these beliefs and attitudes. These beliefs, whether positive or negative, can change over time and are influenced by internal and external factors, such as changing negative thinking patterns and spending time nurturing relationships that improve self-esteem.



Signs of Healthy Self-Esteem

	Healthy self-esteem	Low self esteem
Beliefs	Knows what they value and believe.	Beliefs and values are easily changeable based on what others think as they value others over themselves
	Has belief that they can achieve their goals and aspirations.	Has low belief in them which may result in not striving towards goals or giving up when faced with challenges.
	Has a strong self-concept.	Believes what others think of them and has a biased towards negative feedback.
Thoughts	Compassionate internal voice.	Critical internal voice.
	Accepts that mistakes are a normal part of the human experience and can recover within a reasonable time.	Has a tendency to over magnify errors and continues to ruminate over them.
	Recognises achievement.	Overlooks positives.
	Able to rationalise thoughts.	Overly negative thoughts that cause distress.
Behaviour	Learn from mistakes- see's mistakes as opportunities for self-improvement.	Avoid making mistakes for fear of consequences (this can show in the form of perfectionism, avoiding trying new things, procrastination etc.).

	Clear communication skills because they value their thoughts and opinions and expect others to do the same.	Poor communication skills for a variety of reasons; overly focussed on how someone might receive the information, anxiety about being judged, abandoned, feeling embarrassed...
	Behaves in a way that is true to beliefs and values.	Needs assurance from others to feel valued so behaves in a way that is believed to please the people around them and to avoid upsetting anyone.
Feelings	Self-assured from within.	Feelings of intense anxiety that they are not valued by others.
	Feels secure in themselves and relationships around them.	Feels unwanted, unloved, and less valuable than others.
	Is concerned for others but won't put them in a situation where their feelings are at risk.	Overly focussed on how others are feeling and likely to neglect their own.
Relationships	True to self and values.	Tries to prove self to others in order to feel accepted.
	Comfortable to express self in relationships.	Alters personality to fit what others find pleasing.
	Sets healthy boundaries in relationships.	Have chaotic or toxic relationships in their lives.