



PROBLEMS WITH

SELF-ESTEEM

Explains what self-esteem is, how it can affect us as well as some causes. Including some helpful tips for improving self-esteem and some exercises. Also includes some other useful links and info.

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What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how we perceive ourselves. Self-esteem can be referred to as how much you appreciate and like yourself, this can be determined by different factors e.g. feelings of competence, self-confidence, identity.

Your self-esteem can affect whether you:

- Are able to make decisions/make yourself heard
- Love yourself for who you are
- Value yourself as a person
- Are able to recognise and celebrate your strengths
- Believe in yourself
- Move past your mistakes
- Try new things

Why is self-esteem important?

Our level of self-esteem can impact our decision, relationships and overall wellbeing and emotional health. This can also influence our level of motivation. People with a healthy level of self-esteem will:

- Have a good understanding of their skills and abilities
- Able to maintain healthy relationships
- Have realistic and appropriate expectations of themselves
- Are able to express their feelings and needs



What if I have low self-esteem?

In general, people with a lower self-esteem tend to feel less secure in their abilities and may trust their decisions less. They also might find it hard to try new things because they doubt that they are capable. Having low self-esteem can also affect their relationships in terms of trust and security and also in the sense of them not being able to express their needs. They may also experience low levels of confidence and feel unlovable or not worthy.

Things you might believe if you have low self-esteem:

- Others are better than you
- Fixate on your weaknesses
- Always experience fear, self-doubt, and worry
- Trouble accepting and believing a compliment or positive feedback
- Feel unable to say no
- Put other peoples needs before your own
- Fear of failure
- Difficulty expressing your needs



What can cause low self-esteem?

There are many things that might affect our self-esteem, and this will differ for everyone. For a lot of people though difficult or stressful life experiences can often be a contributing factor for example:

- Losing your job
- Haven been or being bullied/abused
- Relationship breakdown
- Financial or housing issues
- Previous body image problems
- Other physical or mental health problems
- Ongoing stress

Low self-esteem often begins in childhood. Throughout our lives we receive positive and negative messages from others e.g., teachers, friends, siblings, parents and even the media. A message that you are in some way not good enough is the one that stays with you.

It might be that you felt either an internal or external pressure to do well when you were younger, you may have found it hard to live up to those expectations and that caused you to start to have problems with low self-esteem.

How can I improve my self-esteem?

Identify the negative beliefs you have about yourself and then challenge them

You might be always putting yourself down, sometimes its good to stop and think “would I talk this way to a friend?”.

Some examples.

You may find yourself saying that you’re not good enough to get into college and that no one likes you or cares about you. It could be good to jot this down, then next to the notes start to write some challenging evidence to these beliefs.

“I’m too stupid for college” **TRY** “I achieved all my predicted grades & I’m a dedicated student”

“No one cares about me” **TRY** “My friend texts me every week to ask what I’ve been up to”

You can always include some other positive comments.

Highlight your positive qualities

There are things that we are good at. Sometimes when you’re feeling low and useless it can be hard to remember things we are good at.

This might be cooking, singing, puzzles, being a good friend etc.. however small you might think it is a positive quality is still something to highlight. You could keep a list to remind yourself of your positive qualities to look back on when you are feeling low.

Also, by recognising our positive qualities may motivate us to spend more time doing these things. Doing things, we enjoy will help boost our mood

Set yourself mini goals If you are struggling with being able to get something started, try breaking up this goal into small challenges that are easy to achieve and then celebrate yourself for achieving them. For example, if you are looking to learn how to cook, start of slow, start with trying to learn a new recipe every week. Also start with the basics to cooking and watch videos on how to do the basics.

You’ll feel better that you are achieving when the goals are more manageable and be able to feel proud that you are accomplishing something.

Improving self-esteem activities

Something about me

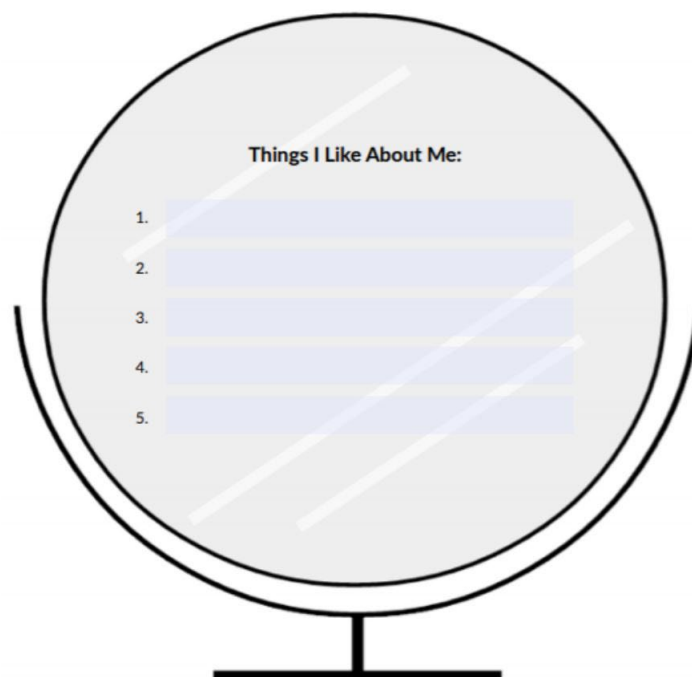
You can either get a piece of paper and draw round your hand and then write in each finger/thumb...

- Something You are Good at....
- Something you enjoy...
- Your friends would say you are...
- My favourite thing about me is....
- One thing you are looking forward to...
- Something I am proud of is....
- Something that makes me unique is....

Alternatively, you could just think about these things and say them in your head as you point to each finger, if you don't want to try and use paper.

Things I like about me worksheet

Look inside and outside at your personality, what you can do, how you treat others, and who you are, then write down some things in the mirror image below.



About me – sentence completion

The goal of the About Me worksheet is to help you identify their own positive traits and accomplishments.



I was really happy when... _____



Something that my friends like about me is... _____



I'm proud of... _____



My family was happy when I... _____



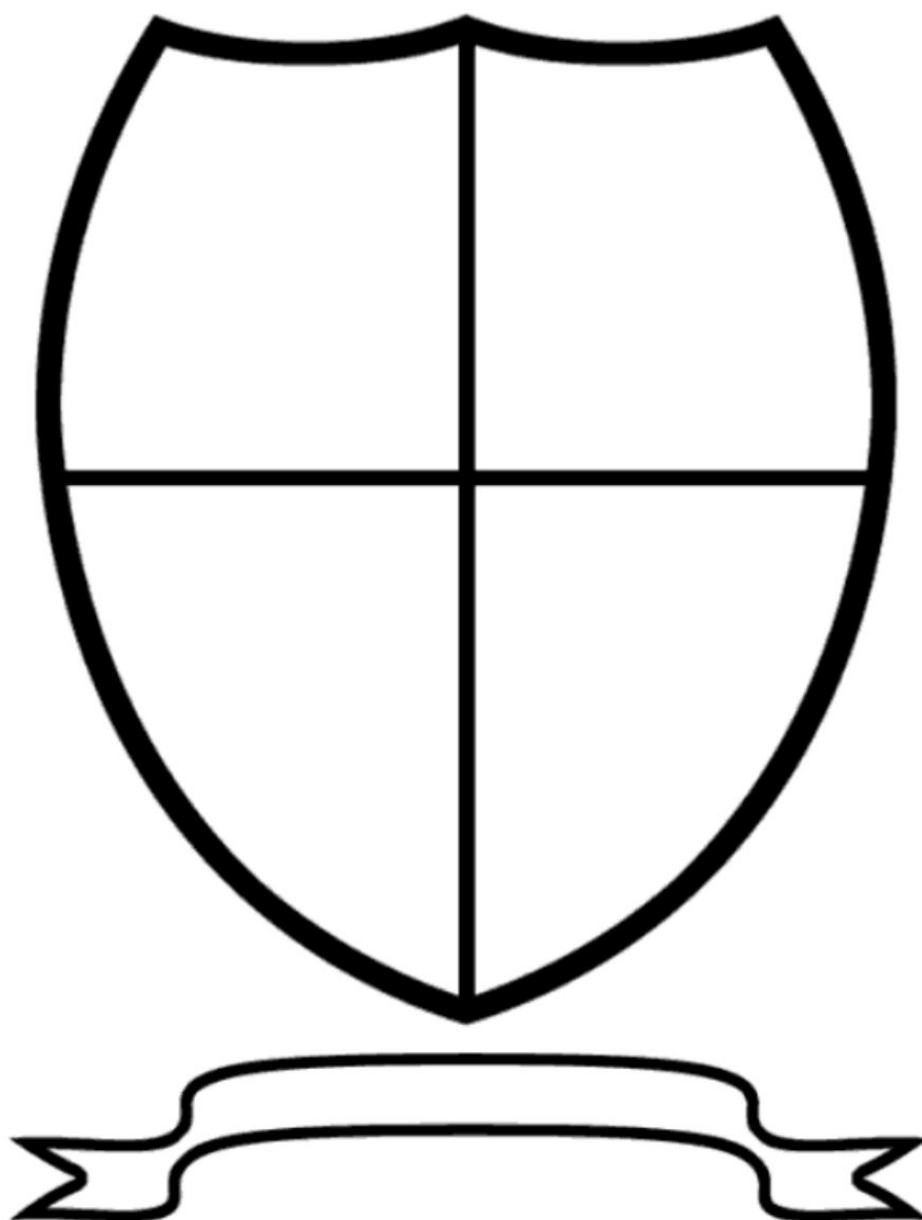
In school, I'm good at... _____



Something that makes me unique is... _____

Coat of arms

Fill in the coat of arms below where each quarter can represent something about you. You can draw, paint, stick things just fill each quarter with something that represents something that you like about yourself.





Helpful Information

Websites:

Mind: <https://www.mind.org.uk/>. The mental health charity. Support and resources for mental health problems.

The Mix: www.themix.org.uk. A confidential helpline, email, webchat and telephone counselling service for young people under 25. Freephone: 0808 808 4994 (daily 13:00- 23:00)

Relate: www.relate.org.uk Talking to teenagers and self esteem www.relate.org.uk/relationship-help/help-familylife-and-parenting/parenting-teenagers/mentalhealth/self-esteem Helpline: 0300 100 1234

Youth Access: www.youthaccess.org.uk. Can help local services which provide counselling to young people aged 12-25

Youth Wellbeing Directory: www.youthwellbeing.co.uk. Lists of local services for young people's mental health and wellbeing.

YoungMinds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>. The YoungMinds resources library is full of useful toolkits, publications, and resources about mental health.

Other resources

Ted talk 3 tips to boost your confidence (Video) - <http://ed.ted.com/lessons/3-tips-to-boost-your-confidence-ted-ed#review>

The quiet power of introverts (Being an introvert isn't a flaw, it's a gift BBC Ideas film). - <https://www.facebook.com/BBCRadio4/videos/252978749347784/> - <http://www.moodjuice.co.uk>