

Self-Esteem

Grades 4-6, Lesson #3

Time Needed

25-35 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to...

1. Explain that everyone needs to feel:
 - "I belong"
 - "I can do things"
 - "People appreciate me."
2. Describe the feelings he or she has when he or she is left out of a group, fails at something, or does something that goes unnoticed.
3. Explain the value of differences and the difficulty of differences.
4. Make an affirming statement to him/herself.
5. Make an affirming statement to a classmate and to a family member.

Agenda

1. Explain the purpose of the lesson.
2. Define self-esteem and describe the origin.
3. Use riddles (transparency #1) to unscramble 3 key elements of self-esteem.
4. Identify situations that *damage* self-esteem.
5. Use "Self-Esteem Worksheet" to reinforce activity 3.
6. Identify situations that *build* self-esteem.
7. Answer "Anonymous Question Box" questions regarding self-esteem.
8. Use an esteem-building small group exercise.
9. Discuss the exercise to summarize the lesson.

Materials Needed

Classroom Materials: (1 per class)

- *Self-Esteem Transparencies #1 and #2*
- Overhead projector

Student Materials: (for each student)

- *Self-Esteem Worksheet (same as Transparency #2)*
- pencils

Activity:**1. Explain that self-esteem means liking yourself.**

And explain that people with lots of self-esteem (i.e., who like themselves) tend to make healthier decisions than people with only a little. They tend to make friends, and keep friends, more easily, etc. This lesson will give everybody some tips on how to boost their own--and others'--self esteem.

2. Describe the origin of self-esteem:

We're all born with an imaginary empty treasure chest. As people love, cuddle, brag about and play with us, it puts treasure in. As they criticize us, it takes treasure away. Sometimes when a lot of put-downs accumulate, the treasure chest locks. Locking protects us from hurts, but also prevents us from feeling the good feelings inside the treasure chest. Three keys can unlock those feelings.

3. Use riddles (transparency #1) to unscramble 3 key elements of self-esteem. Show the class the first (scrambled) key on Transparency #1, but keep the others covered.

a. Read the class your CLUE FOR KEY NUMBER ONE:

"Everybody needs to feel this way. You feel this way when someone chooses you to be on their team. You feel this way when your whole family gets together for Thanksgiving. You feel this way when everybody's going somewhere and they ask 'Aren't you coming?' You feel this way when you're home sick and somebody calls just to see if you're OK. You feel this way when somebody invites you to be in their club."

Ask if anyone knows what the first key to feeling good about yourself is...

ANSWER: **"I belong."**

Have the person who thinks he/she knows come up and write the answer on Transparency #2.

b. Repeat the process for KEY NUMBER TWO:

"Everyone needs to feel this way, too. Jimmy is only three years old; he feels this way when he puts his clothes on all by himself. Kathie is seven; she feels this way when she rides her two-wheeler for the first time. Mick is eleven; he gets this feeling by building model airplanes. Denise is sixteen; she feels this way when she drives the car with her new driver's license. Damien is in a wheelchair; he feels this way with his new electric wheelchair that allows him to go places without being pushed. Grandpa Walt feels this way when he takes care of his great-grandbaby for the evening."

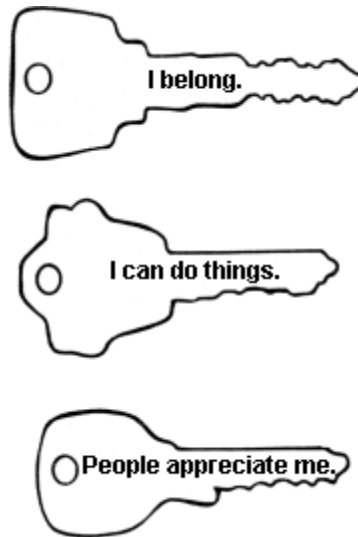
ANSWER: **"I can do things."**

c. CLUE FOR KEY NUMBER THREE:

"Everybody needs to feel this way, also. Mary is doing her chores when the phone rings. She asks her little brother, Jack, to answer the phone. He answers it and takes a message for Mary. She says, "Thanks, kid," and Jack feels this way. When her mother comes home she sees that Mary straightened up and she says, "The house looks great, honey." Mary feels this way. Mary's Mom opens a shopping bag and shows Mary the safety pins Mary's been asking for. Mary grins. "You remembered," she says, hugging her. Mom feels this way.

ANSWER: **"People appreciate me."**

d. You will end up with transparency #2 looking like this:



4. Identify situations that *damage* self-esteem.

Ask the class to think of examples of when a person might feel, "I DON'T belong." How about examples of when they might feel, "I CAN'T do things"? Now help them come up with examples of times when a person might feel, "Nobody appreciates me."

5. Use "Self-Esteem Worksheet" to reinforce activity 3.

Each student fills in his or her own copy of Transparency #2.

6. Identify situations that *build* self-esteem.

Ask the class for examples of when a person might feel "I DO belong." Remembering those occasions can unlock your treasure chest when you feel like there's something wrong with you, because you're lonely. Have them list times they've felt "I CAN do things." Again, remembering is helpful when you feel like giving up. Have them list times they've felt "People DO appreciate me." And finally have them consider how to give other people self-esteem treasure.

7. Answer "Anonymous Question Box" questions about self-esteem.

For referral resources, see Appendix F.

8. OPTIONAL: Use an esteem-building small group exercise.

In groups of four to six, have each person go around the group saying one thing they like about each other person. Remind them of the ground rule, "No put-downs." This exercise will only work in a class that is experienced in small group work. It may work best later in the school year, after the class has built some rapport and a sense of community. As alternatives, see Related Activities A, B and C below.

9. Reiterate that a person's feelings about him/herself are influenced by three things:

- whether he/she feels belonging to a family or other group
- whether s/he feels competent--able to do something well
- whether s/he feels as if other people notice and are gladdened by his or her presence.

Related Activities For Integrated Learning

A. Social Studies

Students can make time lines of their lives, listing things they could do at age 5, now, and things they will be able to do at age 15, age 20, and age 25.

B. Art

Students can draw personal coats of arms showing: in one quadrant, one place they belong; in another, something they can do; in a third, something people appreciate about them; and in the fourth, one way they help to build OTHER people's self-esteem.

C. Bulletin Board

Take a snapshot of each student and make a display of them, with each child's name under his or her picture.

D. Art

Students can draw, paint, or construct self-esteem treasure chests.

Homework

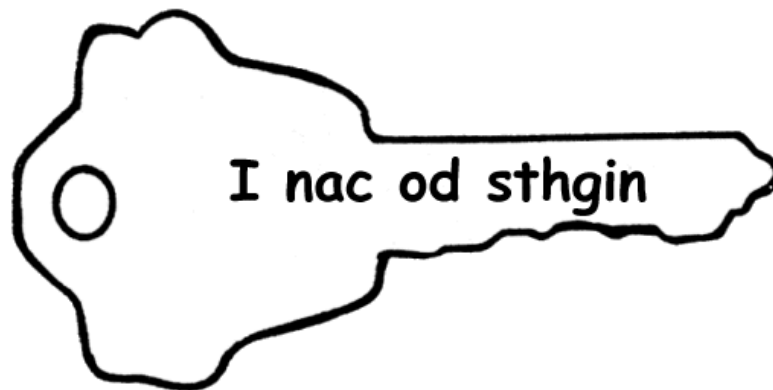
Students' options:

- Ask an adult in their family whether they felt popular when they were the student's age and whether that has ever changed.*
- Give someone (a friend, family member, teacher, or even a stranger) a gift of a piece of self-esteem treasure in one of three ways, through:
 - including that person (to give them a sense of belonging), or
 - complimenting the person on some skill (to give them a sense of being able to do things, or
 - thanking them for something (so they'll feel appreciated).

*see "Preparing Parents" page 6-7

Self-Esteem Transparency 1

Keys To Feeling Good About Yourself



Self-Esteem Transparency 2/Worksheet

NAME _____ DATE _____

Keys To Feeling Good About Yourself

DIRECTIONS: Unscramble the keys. Write the answer inside each key.

