

SELF-ESTEEM

Inform the group that we are going to look at self-esteem.

Ask them if they know what self-esteem is? Flipchart their replies and give your own definition. If a person has a healthy measure of self-esteem he:

- will think well of himself and his abilities
- will not expect perfection but will be satisfied with doing his best
- will be confident and feel loved by family and friends

It may be difficult for some people to realise that it is important to think well of ourselves and that this does not mean that we are egotistical. Explain that we cannot expect others to like us if we do not like ourselves.

Give out **HANDOUT 4** and read each statement out loud. Give everyone a few moments to think about them. Now give out **HANDOUT 5**. Allow 5 minutes for the group to consider these questions and then come together as a group to discuss them.

Flipchart the main ideas / issues that arise.

Write up and discuss the following statements:

- Our value as a person is often determined by how successful we are.
- We feel we must do everything perfectly and live up to a certain standard.
- All of us want to fit in and be accepted by others.
- None of us want to be seen as different.
- We have a strong desire to conform.
- We all want to fit in and be part of the crowd.

Explain that these feelings are usually due to messages we receive as we grow up when we are made to feel that we are 'not good enough'. Because of these messages, some people set themselves such high standards that they are doomed to failure.

DECLARATION OF SELF-ESTEEM

Give out **HANDOUT 6** - Declaration of self-esteem. Ask for a volunteer to read it out slowly. How does the group feel about it? Is there anything they would like to add to it? Can they write their own version?

SELF-IMAGE

Explain that people with low self-esteem often have an idea of who they **should** be, what they **should** look like, and how they **should** act. They are unhappy with themselves, usually through no fault of their own. Give out **HANDOUT 7**. Ask for volunteers to read through the statements and ask which 2 they think are the most important. Does everyone agree? Are there any major differences of opinion?

MY BEHAVIOUR

Give out **HANDOUT 8**. Give the group 15 minutes to underline the correct statements. Now go through each one, ask for opinions, and flipchart the answers once everyone has agreed. Check the answer sheet if in doubt.

LOW, MIDDLE & HIGH SELF-ESTEEM

Give out **HANDOUTS 9, 10 & 11**. Go through each one and ask for volunteers to read through each of the statements. Ask if anyone can think of any other points to add. Does anyone recognise any of these feelings? How would they rate themselves – low, middle or high self-esteem?

HANDOUT 9

Low self-esteem

- ⇒Lonely and isolated**
- ⇒Overly dependent on others**
- ⇒Very possessive of friends and family**
- ⇒Very critical of self and others**
- ⇒Constantly blaming others**
- ⇒Fearful of making mistakes**
- ⇒Constant mood swings**
- ⇒Pessimistic and feels life not worth living**
- ⇒Always looking for praise**
- ⇒Worries constantly**
- ⇒Anxious and depressed**
- ⇒Finds it difficult to form and maintain relationships**
- ⇒Takes offence easily**
- ⇒Aggressive and violent**
- ⇒Fearful of change**
- ⇒Feels unloved and unlovable**
- ⇒Sometimes feels suicidal**
- ⇒Hates criticism**
- ⇒Generally unhappy**
- ⇒No consideration given to own physical health**
- ⇒Unable to express needs**

HANDOUT 10

Middle self-esteem

- ⇒ Looks to others for approval**
- ⇒ Ambitious nature - can be a perfectionist**
- ⇒ Sometimes aggressive - mood swings**
- ⇒ Tries hard to please others**
- ⇒ Finds relationships difficult**
- ⇒ Can take a certain amount of criticism**
- ⇒ Fears new ideas or situations**
- ⇒ Critical of others**
- ⇒ Jealous of others**
- ⇒ Will not seek help or advice when necessary**
- ⇒ Own physical health not of major importance**
- ⇒ Interested in own opinion only**