Brayton Academy

Self-esteem

WELLBEING IN MIND TEAM

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is the opinion we have of ourselves. When we have healthy self-esteem, we tend to feel positive about ourselves and about life in general. It makes us better able to deal with life's ups and downs. When our self-esteem is low, we tend to see ourselves and our life in a more negative and critical light. We also feel less able to take on the challenges that life throws at us.

What causes low self-esteem?

Low self-esteem often begins in childhood. Our teachers, friends, siblings, parents, and even the media send us positive and negative messages about ourselves.

For some reason, the message that you are not good enough is the one that stays with you. Perhaps you found it difficult to live up to other people's expectations of you, or to your own expectations. Stress and difficult life events, such as serious illness or a bereavement, can have a negative effect on self-esteem. Personality can also play a part. Some people are just more prone to negative thinking, while others set impossibly high standards for themselves.

Try to challenge unkind thoughts about yourself. You might automatically put yourself down. If you find yourself doing this, it can help to ask: "Would I talk to a friend in this way?.

Start saying "no"
People with low self-esteem often feel they have to say yes to other people, even when they do not really want to. The risk is that you become overburdened, resentful, angry and depressed.

Recognise the positives
Celebrate your successes, accept compliments, keep a gratitude journey. Self-Esteem Journals, Prompts, PDFs and Ideas (positivepsychology.com)

Build a support network
Try to build relationships with people who are positive and who appreciate you.

Say positive things to yourself
Write a list of things you like about yourself. If you are struggling, think about what a friend or family member would say to you.

Avoid comparing yourself to others.
It might help to limit how much time you spend on social media. What other people often choose to share about their lives isn't always the full picture.

Set yourself a challenge
We all feel nervous or afraid to do things at times. But people with healthy self-esteem do not let these feelings stop them trying new things or taking on challenges. Set yourself a goal, such as joining an exercise class or going to a social occasion. Achieving your goals will help to increase your self-esteem