

(9) SELF-WORTH SCREENING SCALE

Please answer these questions honestly by circling "YES" or "NO"

1. I often wish I could change the way I look YES NO
2. I often worry about what others think and feel about me YES NO
3. I compare myself to others too much YES NO
4. I'm overly shy or overly aggressive YES NO
5. I avoid or worry about doing things because I fear I will fail YES NO
6. I often feel like I have to prove myself to others YES NO
7. I often brag about things to impress others YES NO
8. I wait too long or until the last minute before getting things done YES NO
9. When people disagree with me, I feel angry, resentful, or put down YES NO
10. I often go out of my way to make others happy, and neglect my own needs YES NO
11. I'm too hard on myself YES NO
12. I have difficulty accepting compliments YES NO
13. I often try to act like someone I'm not, or wish I could be like other people I see YES NO
14. I feel depressed about my life and that I can't do anything about it YES NO
15. When I hear of others' successes or see others' doing something better than me,
I feel resentful, less than, and/or wish that it could have been me YES NO
16. I'm scared of letting people know the "real me" YES NO
17. I'm jealous, possessive, or controlling in my significant other relationship YES NO
18. I feel like nobody really cares about me YES NO
19. I use alcohol or other drugs, food, pornography, TV, technology, etc. to feel better ... YES NO
20. It's important to me to have nice clothes, a nice car, and other nice things YES NO

If you answered "yes" to 6 or more of these questions, your self-esteem could probably use some improvement. Give the attached strategies a try, and if they don't seem to help, try counseling.

(10) WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR SELF-WORTH

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1. Confront your negative self-talk, self-criticalness, and worrying by making a list of the positive things about yourself, relationships, and life. Read them over daily to remind yourself that you're not all bad, and that there are good things happening in your life. Write down “realistic” goals for yourself, relationships, and life in general, along with small steps to get there, and stick to the steps as best you can. Also, use a weekly planner to write down your schedule of chores, homework, exercise, spending times with friends, etc. that need to get done, and stick to it!
2. Use your knowledge, skills, abilities, talents, and gifts to help others because nothing fuels well-being better than serving others.
3. Develop your problem solving ability (finding an effective way to attain a goal): (1) identify the challenge/problem, (2) define the challenge/problem, (3) come up with possible strategies to solve the challenge/problem, (4) apply a strategy, (5) look back and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy you tried. If the effectiveness isn't desirable, go back to step 3 and try another strategy.
4. Eat properly and exercise regularly because the condition of your body effects your physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being. Please stay away from alcohol or other drugs, and the excessive use of TV, DVDs/videos, the Internet, video games, your cellphone, and other technology.
5. Be appropriately assertive by honestly expressing your thoughts and feelings to others in a kind, tactful, and respectful manner—keeping in mind how you would like to be spoken to and treated. However, give up the idea that you can make people change if you just say and do the right things. People change because they choose to, not because of you. If you're somewhat shy, push yourself to get more involved in activities with others. It'll feel uncomfortable at first/for awhile, but in time you'll feel more at ease.
6. Avoid comparing yourself to others; just focus on being the best “you” you can be. Your self-worth shouldn't be based on how popular you are, how good you look, how smart you are, how much education you have, the types of clothes you wear, how many nice things you have, how much money you make, whether you come from a good family or not, how you perform in life, etc. because most of these you have no control over. Love yourself unconditionally—if you don't accept and love you, it'll be hard to believe that anyone else does either.
7. If you make a mistake, which everyone does from time-to-time, take responsibility for it, come up with a better way to handle it next time, and then move on. Also, don't be so hard on yourself after a break up, if your grades aren't so good, or other things in your life aren't going the way you'd like. Focus on where you can make improvements, and then do it! Stop blaming yourself every time something goes wrong; you're probably often more innocent than you think.
8. Find a counselor/support group, or visit a bookstore and purchase material on self-worth for help in understanding the origins of your low self-worth and assistance in building it up.
9. Developing a healthy self-worth takes time, so be patient with yourself—it will improve.