



Self-esteem Additional Notes and Content

Self-defeating ways of coping with low self-esteem:

- Quitting
- Avoiding
- Clowning
- Controlling
- Aggressive bullying
- Denying
- Rushing through work

Mr. Rogers story:

Its you I like,
its not the things you wear,
its not the way you do your hair-
but its you I like, the way you are right now,
the way down deep inside you-
not the things that hide you.

How do we learn to put ourselves down?

- Forbidding gestures, child gets spanked or scolded and for awhile knows they are bad
- As a child, rejection by a parent threatens your life!
- So it can be very deeply felt
- Part of you still believes you are bad every time someone gets angry with you

Obstacles to good self-esteem:

- The internal critic- why do we listen?
- Reinforcing; if we don't try, we can't fail
- Parenting errors
- Thinking errors, called cognitive distortions
- Faulty and negative core beliefs
- Parents are the most powerful, let's talk about that first

Five factors that determine the intensity of not-ok feelings:

1. The degree to which behavior is labeled as a moral issue- low grades are a sin rather than a sign that skills need to be taught "bad choices"
2. How much parents fail to separate behavior from identity- you're a bad girl when you hit your sister



3. Frequency of forbidding gestures- repeated phrases like “what’s the matter with you” teach “I’m not okay.”
4. Consistency of forbidding gestures- if you get in trouble sometimes for a behavior but other times its allowed, teaches its not the behavior but you that’s bad
5. How often forbidding gestures were tied to parent anger or withdrawal- “your bad, I’m rejecting you”

Protections are how you try to deny or control a situation you perceive as threatening.

How do you try to control your children?

Hitting/spanking, taking responsibility for others, Yelling, pouting, Criticism, silent treatment, Shaking head, anger, Irritation, explaining, Accusing, Lecturing/moralizing, Sarcasm, blaming, Illness, disapproving sighs/looks, Lying/withholding truth, blaming or poor me tears, Complaining, convincing, Judgment, talking child out of their feelings, Analyzing, put-downs, Interrogating, telling, feelings

How else do you try to control your child?

Being indispensable, superior attitude, Self-righteous, temper tantrums, False flattery, angry withdrawal, Gifts with strings attached, arguing, Threats of: _____

Financial withdrawal, exposure to others, Emotional withdrawal, illness, Violence, You will never be successful unless you _____

Beliefs to Question:

The only way to get them to do what I want is to make them

When I know I’m right, it’s loving to control my children

My attempts to control my children will earn respect and love

I can hide my control so they don’t know they are being manipulated

My anger just happens, I have no control over it

Controlling children teaches responsibility

Being angry is loving if it’s for their own good

Sometimes it’s necessary to yell or hit to get them to behave

I should never let them see me frightened or hurt



Parents are always right

There are no good reasons for children to be disrespectful

Beliefs about Protections:

Our protections will get us what we want

They work to avoid pain

It's possible to be protected and still be loving

You can be protected and open to learning at the same time

It's possible to be protected and feel happy, loved, and adequate

Being unprotected leaves me too vulnerable

If I'm open and loving, people will take advantage of me

Being soft and open is being weak.

People will think less of me.

Being protected feels good

Being protected is really taking care of myself

How do you shut down or ignore to protect yourself?

Work

Tv

Gambling

Drugs

Alcohol

Reading

Hobbies

Friends

Sports

Sleep

Food

Illness

Meditation

Spending

Fantasizing

Spacing Out



Money

Rumination

When self-esteem is too high: parenting may be too permissive, we can create entitlement...

Beliefs to Question:

Going along with what my kids want ensures their love for me

I can avoid problems if I give myself up

Giving myself up doesn't lower my self-esteem

Love requires you to do things you don't want to do

Giving in is a good way to resolve conflicts

If I don't comply they won't love me

I can't be myself and be loved by them

Good parents comply to make their children happy

Complying is more loving than any other protection

I can shut down my feelings and still have a loving relationship with my children

Signs of Healthy Self-esteem:

Enjoys socializing, tolerates errors, smiles readily, realistic, optimistic, confident, feel they belong in their family, flexible problem-solvers, can fail and try again, can ask for help, can deal with not getting their way all the time, shares control with others, willing to try new things

Ways to Build Self-esteem:

- Teach to talk back to the critic
- Guided visualization and daily practice
- Parents as mirrors and models
- Look at the whole child
- Psychoeducation
- See the behavior as an effort to meet a need, and help them learn how to meet the need
- Find what they excel at and build the ability
- Ignore some minor misbehaviors
- Listen to your child actively
- Accept their negative feelings
- How to praise and correct- don't attack
- Autonomy
- Make a list of what you are good at
- Review 3 things you were proud of daily
- Self-talk

Incorrect or irrational core beliefs:

- "I must do well and win approval for my performance or else I rate as a rotten person."



- “Others must treat me considerately and kindly and precisely the way I want them to treat me if they don't society and the universe must severely blame, damn, and punish them for being inconsiderate.”

“Conditions under which I live must be arranged so that I get practically everything I want comfortably, quickly, and easily and so I get nothing that I don't want.”

- Albert Ellis

Irrational beliefs held by children:

- It's awful if others don't like me.
- I'm bad if I make a mistake.
- Everything should go my way.
- I should always get what I want.
- Things should come easy to me.
- The world should be fair and bad people must be punished.
- I shouldn't show my feelings.
- Adults should be perfect.
- There's only one right answer.
- I must win!
- I shouldn't have to wait for anything.
- It's my parents fault if I'm not happy.
- I can't help it that's just the way I am.
- It's better to avoid challenges than to risk failure.
- I can't stand to be criticized.

Teaching Self-Control

- Self-monitor
- Self-evaluate
- Self-reward

Prevents the adult from becoming the discriminating stimuli, where the adult signals the time to act right, preserves behavioral improvement after the adult/rewards are withdrawn

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Self Talk, Self Esteem, and Emotional Control Resources

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