

Slam Dunk Self-Esteem Activityⁱ

Recommended Age: 12+

Goals

- To explore elements of self-esteem.
- To practice positive self-talk and recognize positive self-reflection.

Have Ready

- Write the '5 Steps to Building Self-Esteem' on the board or reveal the flipchart with the steps written on it (just the bolded parts). Briefly go through each step, using the information below each bullet.

Instructions

- Choose five Slam Dunk statements and write them on the board or reveal a flipchart with them on it.
- Hand out a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil to each youth.
- Ask youth to choose at least one question and write their answer on the blank sheet of paper.
- Once everyone has finished, ask youth to take turns sharing their answers (but remind them that sharing is voluntary). After each participant has read their answer, invite them to crumple up their sheet of paper and slam dunk it into the container or basket (or bag, if nothing else).

Sample Flipchart

Five Steps to Building Self-Esteem

These are some steps that can be helpful in building self-esteem:

- **Value yourself and value others**
Identify the qualities you like about yourself and remind yourself of them often. Learn to forgive yourself for mistakes you have made in the past. Communicate your feelings and thoughts

honestly and directly. When you appreciate your own worth, it is easier to respect the worth of others. Accept other people for who they are. Try not to control someone else.

- **Get connected**

We all need extra support. Connecting is about both caring and feeling cared for. Look at the people, places, or things around you that mean something to you and find positive examples of mutual and supportive relationships. This can include friends, family, and counsellors. When you are alone, use the time to enjoy yourself rather than just existing until you can be with others.

- **Think about your thinking**

Be aware of your thoughts and your negative self-talk such as blaming, criticizing, or comparing. Notice if there are patterns to when these thoughts come up. Challenge your negative thoughts when they happen. Remind yourself of your strengths instead. This takes practice. Be kind to yourself, don't expect perfection.

- **Live in the moment**

When you are feeling stressed, ask yourself, "Am I okay at this very moment, this very second?" Even in the most difficult times, we are usually okay second by second – it's when we let ourselves get caught up in the past or the future that we tend to feel overwhelmed. Understand that "this too shall pass."

- **Be active**

Move your body in ways that feel good. Studies show that when people get out and do things, especially something physically oriented, they feel better (especially the next day). So, find something that you like that feels good for your body and do it!

Slam Dunk Statements

(Select 5 for youth to choose from)

- Something I do better than most people
- A skill or ability I would like to improve or work on
- A time that I handled a conflict in a positive way
- A time I turned a setback into a triumph (success)
- Something that I am proud of
- Three of my best qualities
- An important relationship in my life and why

- For me, the key to feeling good about myself is...
- Something I am really good at is...
- A promise I made to myself and have kept
- A talent I would like to develop this year
- What I would like to have written on my tombstone
- Something that I want to be complimented on
- An important achievement in my life
- Ways that I show respect for myself
- The most difficult thing I have accomplished
- Things I do for self-care
- An important life lesson I have learned and why
- What I would try if I knew I could not fail
- What I would regret not having done if my life were ending
- The best thing I have ever done for myself
- The best thing I have ever done for another person

¹Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre. (2009). Man to man: A tool-kit for delivering workshops to men and boys about reducing sexual assault. In *Liberty Lane* (pp. 1–647). Fredericton Sexual Assault Crisis Centre, Inc. https://www.libertylane.ca/uploads/1/6/1/7/16174606/man_to_man_toolkit.pdf