

Needs and importance of development of self esteem

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Why Self-Esteem Matters So Much During Teenage Years

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Let's be honest: being a teenager is hard.

You're stuck between growing up and still figuring yourself out. Some days you feel like you're on top of the world, and other days you wonder if you'll ever be enough. That's where **self-esteem** comes in — not as a big fancy concept, but something we live through every single day.

What Is Self-Esteem, Really?

Self-esteem is how we see ourselves when nobody's watching. It's what we think when we look in the mirror, how we talk to ourselves after messing up, or whether we feel like we deserve to take up space in a room. It's not about arrogance or showing off. It's about knowing that you matter — even when your marks aren't perfect, even when people don't text back, even when you're not "doing something productive."

Why Do So Many Teens Struggle with It?

Most of us aren't born hating ourselves. But over time, things pile up. Expectations, comparisons, judgments — and slowly, we start shrinking.

Social media doesn't help.

You scroll for five minutes and suddenly feel like everyone else is prettier, smarter, cooler, more successful. One student said, "Even when I feel okay about myself, one reel can make me feel like I'm behind in life." That's real. **Parents and teachers (even with good intentions)** sometimes add pressure without realizing it. A lot of teens said they feel like they're "never enough" — no matter how hard they try. Someone wrote, "I'm scared to tell my parents about bad marks. Not because they'll shout, but because I hate disappointing them."

Friend groups and classmates can be brutal.

If you're left out, mocked, or constantly judged, it hits you deep. And sadly, a lot of people just say, "Ignore them" — but that's not always easy when you're stuck with those people every day.

What Low Self-Esteem Looks Like

It's not always visible.

Some students become quieter, scared to share ideas in class. Others overachieve, constantly pushing themselves for approval. Some try to be "cool" to fit in. And a lot of us start doubting ourselves silently — thinking we're not good-looking enough, smart enough, or fun enough.

It can lead to anxiety, overthinking, people-pleasing, or just this constant tired feeling of "why even try?"

But It Doesn't Have To Stay That Way

Self-esteem isn't fixed. It grows — and sometimes, all it needs is a little kindness, both from others and from ourselves.

Here's what helps:

At Home:

- Don't just praise marks. Appreciate effort, small wins, or even failures handled with grace.
- Listen without judging or jumping to advice.
- Let teens feel seen and trusted. We're not perfect, but we're trying.

In School:

- Stop comparing students all the time. Not everyone is built for the same path.
- Celebrate things like empathy, growth, honesty — not just ranks.

- Teachers matter more than they realize. One kind comment from a teacher can stay with someone for years.

For Ourselves:

- We need to talk to ourselves the way we'd talk to a friend — gently.
- Some days, it's okay to just survive. That doesn't make you lazy — it makes you human.
- Journaling, expressing, or even crying it out — all of it is healing.

Final Thoughts

Teenagers aren't asking for the world. We just want to feel understood.

We want to grow into confident, kind, unafraid adults. But for that, we need support — not pressure. We need someone to believe in us, especially on the days we don't believe in ourselves.

Self-esteem is not a luxury. It's a lifeline. And if we can protect it, nurture it, and rebuild it when it breaks — we give teens something powerful: the ability to love themselves, no matter what life throws at them.