

LOW SELF-ESTEEM CHECKLIST

Glynis Hannell BA (Hons) MSc Psychologist

Name of child or adolescent

Age

Each item should be checked off using the following rating scale

- 0 Not at all, never occurs, does not apply
- 1 Mild, sometimes observed, applies to some extent
- 2 Moderate, often observed, certainly applies
- 3 Severe, frequently observed, strongly applies

Unrealistic perceptions about self

Says negative things about themselves	0	1	2	3
Exaggerates or fabricates stories to inflate own image	0	1	2	3
Does not expect to be liked	0	1	2	3
Does not expect to succeed	0	1	2	3

Weak foundations for positive self-esteem

Learning difficulties.....	0	1	2	3
Social difficulties	0	1	2	3
Clumsy, poor at physical skills.....	0	1	2	3

Not confident with schoolwork

Unwilling to try new things unless sure of success	0	1	2	3
Does not initiate own learning.....	0	1	2	3
Unwilling to take on extra or more challenging tasks.....	0	1	2	3
Avoids answering in class.....	0	1	2	3

Does not cope well with failure

Says 'I don't know' or 'I can't remember' to avoid errors	0	1	2	3
Gets upset if they lose	0	1	2	3
Argues things are not fair when they fail	0	1	2	3
Reluctant to try again if they have failed at something	0	1	2	3
Blames bad luck or others for failure.....	0	1	2	3
Exaggerates failures when they do occur	0	1	2	3
Reluctant to ask for help when in difficulty.....	0	1	2	3
Devalues the success of others	0	1	2	3

Does not cope well with success

Braggs and 'goes over the top' when they succeed	0	1	2	3
Uncomfortable with praise or compliments	0	1	2	3
Attributes success to good luck	0	1	2	3



Finds it hard to accept responsibility for own actions

Denies wrongdoing even when clearly at fault	0	1	2	3
Unwilling to make decisions, wants someone else to decide.....	0	1	2	3
Finds it difficult to apologize	0	1	2	3

Negative perceptions from others

Put down by siblings and/or peers	0	1	2	3
Put down by adults in family or community.....	0	1	2	3
Victim of teasing or bullying.....	0	1	2	3

Easily led

Anxious to follow peer group fads and fashions.....	0	1	2	3
Easily led by others.....	0	1	2	3
Does not initiate activities	0	1	2	3
Does not voice own opinion	0	1	2	3

Image is very important

Tries to look tough, tries to maintain a 'cool' image	0	1	2	3
Tries to impress peers by acting the clown	0	1	2	3
Uses possessions to gain prestige	0	1	2	3

Does not have positive friendships

Bullies younger or weaker children	0	1	2	3
Associates with peers who are unpopular with others	0	1	2	3
Tries to buy friendships	0	1	2	3

Eating patterns disturbed

Tries to improve image by extreme dieting	0	1	2	3
Eats for comfort.....	0	1	2	3

Positive characteristics and strengths (describe at least 3)

Important notes

This checklist can be used to help recognize low self-esteem. However, several conditions have similar characteristics and there may a range of explanations for the observations made. Specialist assessment is necessary for a formal diagnosis.

- Supporting notes on low self-esteem (pages 162–7)
- Guides for discussions with colleagues, parents and students (pages 184–8)

