



6. IMPERFECT? PERFECT!

Building my self-esteem by figuring out who I am

Targeted competency(ies) (ÉKIP, WHO)	SELF-KNOWLEDGE AND SELF-WORTH SELF-ACCEPTANCE
Cross-curricular competencies (QEP)	ACHIEVING THEIR POTENTIAL COOPERATING
General workshop objectives	AT THE END OF THE WORKSHOP, THE STUDENT WILL BE ABLE TO <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand self-esteem and its components • recognize and appreciate their strengths and good qualities • recognize and better accept their limits and imperfections • use their personality traits to their advantage

Total duration

60-MINUTE version, follow all steps

40-MINUTE version, DO NOT do the activities marked with the  icon

Materials and preparation

- Print the *Building my self-esteem, recognizing my strengths, and accepting my imperfections* worksheet (1 per student)



A. The eyes are the mirror of the soul (10 minutes)

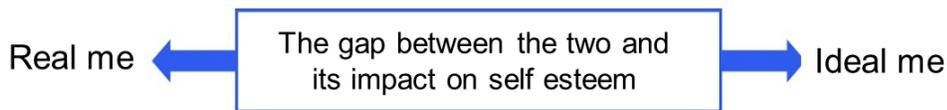
1. Show the video “People react to being called beautiful” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aW8BDgLpZkl> (time: 4:47 min.)
2. After watching it, ask the students for their first impressions, their observations, and how this video made them feel.
3. Ask them to think about the following questions related to the video and listen to a few answers:
 - What do you find “beautiful”?
 - Is it conceited to think of yourself as beautiful or handsome? Why?
 - Did the kids’ reactions speak to you? How do you react when someone compliments you?
 - Why is it so hard to accept a compliment?
 - Did you notice that the kids became even more beautiful when they were complimented?
 - Can we say that EVERYONE is beautiful, or just a select group of people? Are some people just born lucky?
4. Conclude by telling the students that it’s not pretentious to love and think highly of themselves. **It’s important.**

B. Video: Sacha and self-esteem – Part 1

C. The real me vs. the ideal me (15 minutes)

1. Start by asking the students: “In your own words, can you tell me what self-esteem is?” Take a few answers and complete with the following explanations:
 - Like Sacha said in the video, self-esteem refers to **the value that a person gives to themselves. High self-esteem** is the result of making a **positive self-assessment** (Neff and Vonk, 2009; Neff, 2011; Ouellet, 2019).
 - Self-esteem is a work in progress during adolescence because of all the identity changes that are happening (Dorard, Bungener and Berthoz, 2013; Guillon and Crocq, 2004).

- Summarize by telling the students that loving themselves doesn't mean they aren't ever allowed to feel insecure, or that they're pretentious or conceited. Instead, it means being able to recognize their value, forgive themselves, accept their imperfections, feel proud of themselves, respect their limits, etc. (Human avant tout, <https://humainavanttout.com/a-propos>).
- Continue by explaining that an easy way **to explore their self-esteem is to consider the gap that exists between their "real me" and their "ideal me."** Point out that the bigger the gap between the two, the more their self-esteem will suffer (Duclos, 2010).



- In other words, point out that:

Your "real me"

- Is the image you have of yourself; your strengths, your weaknesses, your victories, and your defeats.
- Is the reflection you see in the mirror. You may see yourself in a more positive or negative light.

Your "ideal me"

- Is how you view yourself at your very best. Your "ideal me" is the person you would ideally like to be.

Self-esteem is influenced by:

- The **gap** between your "real me" and your "ideal me." The bigger or more insurmountable you perceive the gap to be between "who you are" and "who you would like to be," the more your self-esteem will suffer. Conversely, the closer your "real me" is to your "ideal me," the higher your self-esteem will be!

- Hand out the *Building my self-esteem* worksheet and ask the students to answer the first question individually (1. *The real me vs. the ideal me*).

D. Meditation on strengths (5-10 minutes)

- Now ask the students to close their eyes for a minute. Ask them to think about a personality trait or characteristic that they especially like about themselves (a strength or good quality).
- Tell them to let the answer come to them naturally, without trying to think of something as quickly as possible. Once they have their answer, tell the students to take a moment to silently compliment themselves on this characteristic.

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3. Ask them to also notice the emotions or sensations that the compliment brings up.
 - How does it feel to compliment yourself?
 - How does it feel to take a moment to celebrate the good things about yourself?
 4. Tell the students to think of a way they could use this strength or good quality sometime during the day or week ahead. Give them time to come up with an answer. As needed, give them one or two examples:
 - I'm sociable, so I'll make the first move to help someone fit in and feel welcomed.
 - I'm good at sports, so I'll team up with someone who has a harder time in my gym class.
 5. Ask the students to imagine how acting on this strength will affect the people around them. Now ask them to imagine for a moment what would happen if everyone acted on one of their good qualities.
 - What effect would this have?
 - How would it change the group dynamics?
 6. Give them a minute to imagine the scenario and encourage them to play to this strength over the next few days. End the meditation by telling them to open their eyes, stretch, and yawn if they feel the need to, before rejoining the class.
 7. Explain to the students that what they just experienced is a form of meditation. It involves focusing their attention on a specific element that can be concrete, such as their breathing (like they practised during the workshop), or more abstract, such as a strength or good quality.



Meditation is simply taking the time to settle into a comfortable position—maybe in silence at first to help centre yourself—and focus your attention on a specific thing, considering it from a fresh perspective (André, 2009). It doesn't need to be long or complicated. The students can gradually start meditating for a little longer or on different things, depending how this makes them feel.

E. Bridging the gap between your two “me’s” (15-20 minutes)

1. Reassure the students that everyone (without exception!) has strengths and weaknesses. It's normal to be better at some things and weaker at others.
2. Collect the *Building my self-esteem* worksheet.

3. Explain that self-esteem is made up of **four spheres of competencies (academic, social, emotional, physical)** based on which a person judges themselves (Ouellet, 2019).
4. Give a short definition of each sphere, as written on their worksheet:
 - Academic sphere: Your perception of your ability to do well at school.
 - Social sphere: Your perception of your ability to connect with others, make new friends, and maintain relationships.
 - Emotional sphere: Your perception of your ability to manage your emotions.
 - Physical sphere: Your perception of your physical appearance and abilities.
5. Give the students the following instructions for answering the second question on the worksheet (*2. The four spheres of competencies*):
 - Copy your answer to the first question on the worksheet (*1. The real me vs. the ideal me*) into the four spheres table. Does your description of your “real me” and your “ideal me” correspond to one sphere in particular? Or several?
 - Now complete the four spheres by describing your “real me” and your “ideal me” for each one.
6. When most of the students have finished, explain the third question on the worksheet (*3. Bridging the gap between your two “me’s”*):
 - Circle the sphere for which the gap between your “real me” and your “ideal me” seems the biggest, the most insurmountable. In other words, the sphere in which you feel your self-esteem suffers the most.
 - Now write a sentence using “**AND... NO MATTER WHAT**” that bridges the gap between your two “me’s” and helps build your self-esteem.

For example: “I’m afraid others will laugh at me **AND** I’ll get up on stage **NO MATTER WHAT** to sing at the annual talent show, because I know I can do it.”
7.  Before asking them to do the exercise individually, ask them to imagine what this sentence might look like in Sacha’s situation. Listen to the students’ sentences and complete with the following, as needed:

Sacha (physical sphere): I don’t think I’m any good at basketball **AND** I’ll still play **NO MATTER WHAT** in the tournament organized by my gym teacher, because I know I’m up for the challenge.”



Point out that the idea isn't to ignore their feelings or negative thoughts, but to carry on **DESPITE** them (Ciarrochi, Hayes and Bailey, 2014; Harris, 2009; Hayes, Strosahl and Wilson, 2012).

8. Now ask the students to answer the third question on the worksheet. Once they are done, conclude with this:



Being kinder to ourselves, even despite our weaknesses, failings, and faults, helps to build our self-esteem. No one is perfect, but you don't have to be perfect to love yourself, be loved by others, and accept that you have value. But some of the things that we like less about ourselves or that we would like to improve can be opportunities to take action, make changes, and find solutions. So, do we need to accept ourselves the way we are, or try to change? A little bit of both...



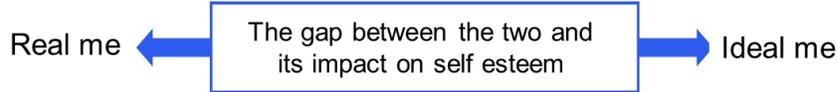
Finally, explain to the students that we can start by accepting ourselves the way we are, while still knowing that we can change and evolve. Accepting yourself the way you are and making improvements is not a contradiction.

E. Video: Sacha and self-esteem – Part 2 and REMINDER: HORS-PISTE challenge (5 minutes)

This week, encourage the students to build their self-esteem by trying to bridge the gap between their two “me’s” (real me and ideal me). Encourage them to transform their self-criticism (weaknesses, imperfections, struggles, traits they don't like about themselves) into positive, self-compassionate statements, using the “*AND... NO MATTER WHAT*” strategy. Also ask them to try a meditation exercise during their day-to-day lives (like the meditation on their strengths that they did during the workshop).



1. The real me vs. the ideal me



Describe your “real me” (your image of yourself, your reflection in the mirror):

Describe your “ideal me” (the person you would ideally like to be):

2. My four spheres of competencies

Describe your “real me” and your “ideal me” for each sphere of competencies.

<p style="text-align: center;">Academic sphere</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your perception of your ability to do well at school</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REAL ME IDEAL ME</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Social sphere</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your perception of your ability to make new friends and maintain relationships</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REAL ME IDEAL ME</p>
YOU	
<p style="text-align: center;">Emotional sphere</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your perception of your ability to manage your emotions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REAL ME IDEAL ME</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Physical sphere</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Your perception of your physical appearance and abilities</p> <p style="text-align: center;">REAL ME IDEAL ME</p>

3. **Bridging the gap between your two “me’s”**

Write a positive, self-compassionate statement using the “**AND... NO MATTER WHAT**” strategy to bridge the gap between your two “me’s” in one of the spheres of competencies.
