

Lecture No. 07

Classroom Activities to Build Self-Esteem and a Feeling of Belonging

Self-esteem is the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness. It is confidence in the efficacy of our mind, in our ability to think. By extension, it is confidence in our ability to learn, make appropriate choices and decisions, and respond effectively to change.

Identifying Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is considered worthy of the achievement enhancement. Whenever the self-esteem is high the students produced better results. The issue of what self-esteem is, what it depends on, and what are some of the most prevalent misconceptions about it is essential to be discussed. Self-esteem is an experience. It is a particular way of experiencing the self. The six practices that are found to be essential for the developing self-esteem: the practice of living consciously, of self-acceptance, of self-responsibility, of self-assertiveness, of purposefulness, and of integrity.

1. The practice of living consciously

Respect for facts; being present to what we are doing while are doing it; seeking and being eagerly open to any information, knowledge, or feedback that bears on our interests, values, goals, and projects; seeking to understand not only the world external to self but also our inner world, so that we do not out of self-blindness.

2. The practice of self-acceptance

The willingness to own, experience, and take responsibility for our thoughts, feelings, and actions, without avoidance, denial, or disowning and also without self-denial; giving oneself permission to think one's thoughts, experience one's emotions, and look at one's actions without necessarily liking, endorsing, or condoning them; the virtue of realism applied to the self.

3. The practice of self-responsibility

Realizing that we are the author of our choices and actions; that each one of us is responsible for life and well-being and for the attainment of our goals; that if we need the cooperation of other people to achieve our goals, we must offer values in exchange.

4. The practice of self-assertiveness

Being authentic in our dealings with others; treating our values and persons with decent respect in social contexts; refusing to fake the reality of who we are or what we esteem in order to avoid disapproval; the willingness to stand up for ourselves and our ideas in appropriate ways in appropriate contexts.

5. The practice of living purposefully

Identifying our short-term and long-term goals or purposes and the actions needed to attain them (formulating an action-plan); organizing behavior in the service of those goals; monitoring action to be sure we stay on track; and paying attention to outcome so as to recognize if and when we need to go back.

6. The practice of personal integrity

Living with congruence between what we know, what we profess, and what we do; telling the truth, honoring our commitments, exemplifying in action the values we profess to admire.

Strategies to Improve Self Esteem in the Classroom

Self-esteem is an important aspect of a student's life and performance. It is about how a student feels about himself or herself. It has been documented through research that self-esteem is positively correlated to a student's performance. There is an inherent need in every child to be appreciated by those around them and also to feel proud of them in a healthy way. It is important for teachers to recognize this need and make sure that they implement strategies and measures to inculcate a healthy level of self-esteem in their students. Make sure that every child gets ample attention and praise in order to feel motivated to perform better.

Expectations are another crucial part of the classroom environment. Every child has capabilities that are unique and it is important to understand this when evaluating them. Make sure to give ample opportunities. Take care to include every child in the activities planned and also provide opportunities to engage the child's attention. Every child will have certain things they feel good about doing and if find that function is no easy, need to work at drawing the child out. Maintain a portfolio of student activities. Encourage the child to participate in simple events and have little activities where everyone feels like a winner.

Building a positive self-image is crucial to building self-esteem in a child. Have activities right from the beginning of the day, an interesting one would be to have the student's state one good fact about themselves during roll call. This could be something like saying great hair, good writer or always smiles instead of "present". When a child has done something wrong or has misbehaved make sure to address the matter in private rather than publicly bringing it to the notice of the whole class. Handling kids carefully is extremely important as it can leave serious scars on their self-esteem.