SENSE OF SELF-WORTH

Can be used in conjunction with the SenseAbility Essential Skills Module and DVD
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Welcome to the Sense of Self-worth Module, one of the seven modules of beyondblue’s SenseAbility Suite.

SenseAbility is designed to help enhance and maintain resilience and psychological wellbeing in young people (ages 12–18) by building their social and emotional skills. Young people who possess sound social and emotional skills are generally better able to cope with the stressors of daily life. They also tend to have better relationships with their parents, teachers and peers, and perform better academically. Very importantly, having these skills makes it less likely that a young person will experience a significant mental health problem in the future.

This suite of modules uses a strength-based approach that asks students to concentrate less on things that they think might be ‘wrong’ with themselves or their world, and focus more on the things that are okay or good, and which they can capitalise on. For example, they might not have the body they think is ideal, but that body still allows them to move and talk and eat and feel. They may not be the most popular person in class, but they might still possess valued qualities like loyalty or the ability to share a joke, or take good care of their siblings. In short, if students take their focus away from ‘faults’ and ‘defects’ and build instead on their inherent qualities and things that they are competent or skilled at, they open themselves up to more opportunities to be satisfied in life.

The SenseAbility Suite covers six separate but interlinked life ‘Senses’; it also covers ‘Essential Skills’—important life and interaction skills often needed to cope with the changes and challenges of everyday life.

### THE SENSEABILITY SUITE

<table>
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<th>Definition</th>
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<td><strong>SELF-WORTH</strong></td>
<td>Knowledge and belief in your strengths, qualities, and abilities, and an acceptance of your inherent value and individuality. Building and maintaining a belief in the value of the essential ‘you’ can help you face life's changes and challenges more effectively. Self-worth is particularly important during transitional phases in your life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTROL</strong></td>
<td>Belief that you have the skills and ability to cope with life's challenges, and to manage your emotions. Includes a realistic recognition of what is within and what is outside your control. It is an understanding that, although you cannot control all of life's events, you do have some control over your responses to those events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BELONGING</strong></td>
<td>The feeling of being valued, needed, accepted, and meaningfully connected to a social network. Feeling ‘connected’ to your friends, family, school, and community provides a Sense of Belonging, which is especially important when times are tough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURPOSE</strong></td>
<td>Sense of Purpose (or meaning) is the motivation that drives you toward a satisfying future. It also helps you to get the most from the things you do and achieve – large and small – right now. Your Sense of Purpose is shaped by things you believe in and value – your own personal code of behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FUTURE</strong></td>
<td>Gives feelings of hopefulness about the future, allowing you to act purposefully and positively. It can help you feel encouraged about setting goals for the future and making plans to meet those goals. It involves positive expectations, realistic thinking, goal setting and problem-solving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HUMOUR</strong></td>
<td>The ability to see the lighter and ‘funnier’ side of life, including your own foibles. A Sense of Humour enables you to appreciate laughter and to enjoy life. An important aspect of the sense is the ability to plan enjoyable/pleasant events into your life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESSENTIAL SKILLS</strong></td>
<td>These are life skills which help you to interact more effectively with others, and to cope better with life’s changes and challenges. These skills are broken into six main types: helpful thinking and self-talk; emotion recognition and regulation; life problem solving; communicating effectively; planning and time management; and keeping well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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This Sense of Self-worth Module can be delivered as a stand-alone learning tool, or in combination with any or all of the other SenseAbility modules. For suggestions on delivering more than one module, see Delivering SenseAbility (p.49)
About Sense of Self-worth

Your Sense of Self-worth is how you regard yourself. It is your own understanding of your strengths, your innate qualities, your personal attributes, and (to a lesser extent) your skills and abilities. In other words, your Sense of Self-worth is a measure of how you value yourself.

Having a healthy Sense of Self-worth isn’t the same as having an inflated ego, nor is it about valuing yourself just because you might be good at something or have an appealing physical attribute. It is about valuing yourself as a unique individual – for who you are, not what you do. This means everyone – regardless of skill, possessions and looks – should be able to build a healthy Sense of Self-worth.

Self-worth is influenced by lots of different factors: the environments in which we live, study, and socialise; how we think we perform in different activities and settings; things that other people say to us; and (perhaps most importantly) things that we say to ourselves. It is this last factor – self-talk – that we have the most influence over, and so helpful self-talk is extremely important to building and maintaining a healthy Sense of Self-worth.

Goals of this Module

This module aims to convey the important role that a healthy Sense of Self-worth plays in mental and emotional wellbeing.

A healthy and realistic Sense of Self-worth can give you the confidence to try new things and try again if you falter, to get along with others, to meet new people, to relish new challenges, and to fully enjoy good moments in life.

This module also highlights that a low Sense of Self-worth can have harmful consequences, including mental health problems like anxiety and depression. Low self-worth can discourage you from trying new things or meeting new people; it can exaggerate the importance of things you may not be good at, and diminish how you value your unique aspects. A low Sense of Self-worth can limit both your enjoyment of the present and your growth into the future.

Activities and discussions in this module will aim to make students think about:

• how each of us has innate value
• the importance of valuing our own uniqueness, as well as the uniqueness of others
• how speaking to ourselves in helpful ways can enhance the way we value ourselves
• how, if we value ourselves, other people may also value us more.
Here are the seven key goals of the Sense of Self-worth Module. Keep them in mind as you deliver each session. At the end of the module, your students should be able to:

1. DEFINE Sense of Self-worth.
2. UNDERSTAND what a Sense of Self-worth provides them with.
3. IDENTIFY the key features of Sense of Self-worth.
4. IDENTIFY aspects of Sense of Self-worth within themselves and how important the sense is in their own lives.
5. RECOGNISE how strong their own Sense of Self-worth is and their capacity to enhance it.
6. UNDERSTAND that their thoughts about events – not the events themselves – affect their feelings and behaviours, and that they have the ability to change those thoughts.
7. PRACTISE and APPLY their understanding and new knowledge about Sense of Self-worth in real life.

In your final session revisit these seven key goals to ensure that your students have met them.

Sense of Self-worth: Main Themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Self-worth | Knowledge and belief in your strengths, qualities, and abilities, and an acceptance of your inherent value and individuality. Building and maintaining a belief in the value of the essential ‘you’ can help you face life’s changes and challenges more effectively. Self-worth is particularly important during transitional phases in your life. | 1. Uniqueness & Diversity  
2. Finding Value in Your World  
3. Roles & Relationships  
4. Values & Qualities |

Many of this module’s activities relate to four main theme groups dominant in Sense of Self-worth:

1. **Uniqueness & Diversity** – The key to a healthy Sense of Self-worth is an understanding that there simply is no one else like you. Everyone is unique and is valuable because of that uniqueness. Hand-in-hand with this understanding is an appreciation that other people are often (conversely) not like you, but should nevertheless be valued for their own uniqueness.

2. **Finding Value in Your World** – In a society where people often seem to be valued for singular achievements, skills, or external qualities, you need to remember that great pleasure can also be found in things less obvious. For instance, you might get simple satisfaction from mowing the elderly neighbour’s lawn once a month, or from keeping a herb garden at home. These things mightn’t make the tabloids, but they can nevertheless be very important to a healthy Sense of Self-worth.

3. **Roles & Relationships** – Knowing that you have relationships with other people and that you are important to them can be very important in strengthening and maintaining your Sense of Self-worth. It can be valuable to your Sense of Self-worth to recognise, for example, that ‘I am a brother/friend/daughter/pet-owner/grandson/etc.’ and therefore play an important role in someone’s or something’s life.

4. **Values & Qualities** – It is very easy in today’s world for young people to make judgments about themselves and others based on external or superficial criteria (e.g. whether someone has certain looks, desirable possessions, particular skills). However, strong Self-worth comes from appreciating more fundamental things, such as the way you treat other people and the way you act in a wide range of situations.

If you want to select activities by theme, you can do so easily using the Classroom Activities Guide (p.47).
**Sense of Self-worth** – like all of SenseAbility – is based on cognitive-behavioural principles. This evidence-based approach says that our thoughts play a central role in influencing our feelings and our consequent behaviour. In other words, when an event happens to us, it is our interpretation of and thoughts about the event – not the event itself – that leads us to feel certain emotions and act in particular ways.

In a school setting, an example of the A-B-C-D principle (shown below) might be when two students receive exactly the same exam score, yet have completely different emotional and behavioural reactions. One student might be disappointed and upset because he/she thinks it is not the top mark and therefore he/she did not perform effectively, while the other may be delighted because it is a better mark than he/she usually achieves. A clip demonstrating this is included on the Essential Skills DVD (Helpful Thinking & Self-Talk, Unit 1, Clip #2).

Very importantly, this model proposes that while we often can’t change events, we do have the power to change the way we think about those events, and therefore how we feel and how we behave. Put simply, the A-B-C-D approach means that changing the way we think can help make us feel better.

Many of the activities and discussion cues included in this module – particularly the Core Activity ‘Compose a Poem’ (p.14) – relate directly to this A-B-C-D Model. These will often include questions about what the students were thinking during the activity they just performed or the event being discussed, and how those thoughts affected the way they felt and what they did as a result. It is important for you to keep this thought–feeling–action link at the front of mind.

If you have already delivered a Core Activity similar to ‘Compose a Poem’ with another Sense module, you may consider reinforcing students’ understanding of the A-B-C-D Model through another activity, such as ‘Noise in the Night’ (p.73), or by brainstorming scenarios where a single event can result in different feelings and actions in different people, simply because they thought about that event in different ways.

Once you feel your students have a good grasp of the A-B-C-D Model concept, the next step is to encourage them to get into the habit of challenging unhelpful thoughts about events in order to make themselves feel better (see p.7 for examples). The Essential Skills Module also examines strategies for challenging unhelpful thoughts in the Helpful Thinking & Self-talk section which is supported by DVD clips.

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**EXAMPLE OF A-B-C-D MODEL**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTECEDENTS</th>
<th>BELIEFS</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCES</th>
<th>DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event/Situation</td>
<td>Thoughts</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David asks a girl he likes to a party, but she says she is too busy this week.</td>
<td>She must think I’m boring or ugly.</td>
<td>DESPONDENT</td>
<td>David stays at home and mopes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David asks a girl he likes to a party, but she says she is too busy this week.</td>
<td>Well, maybe she is busy. I’ll ask her out another time.</td>
<td>PHILOSOPHICAL</td>
<td>David goes to the party anyway with a friend.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: If you want to use the A-B-C-D Model as a Hand-out or for overhead or data projection, it is also included on p.54, and in PDF on the SenseAbility CD.
Unhelpful Self-talk

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<tbody>
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<td>Nobody likes me</td>
<td>It doesn’t matter if I’m not liked by everybody.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I know there are people who care about me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am no good at anything</td>
<td>I might not do everything well but I am still an okay person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a loser</td>
<td>I don’t have to be good at everything to have value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I might not be perfect, but I have my good points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I do have a go at things that matter to me.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Self-talk — The Most Essential Skill

The importance of helpful self-talk to wellbeing is difficult to overstate. Helpful self-talk is critical to building a strong Sense of Self-worth. When we speak to ourselves helpfully, we are more likely to take healthy risks, try new things, and interact more rewardingly with others. However, putting ourselves down and focusing on things we don’t like about ourselves can stop us trying new things and recovering from challenges. This can steal pleasure from things we might be quite fine at.

The way we think and talk to ourselves can directly affect the way we feel and, consequently, the actions we take or don’t take. In this respect, self-talk relates directly to the A-B-C-D Model. Therefore, if we get into the habit of challenging unhelpful thoughts and generating alternative ways of thinking (see below), we help protect our emotional and mental wellbeing.

Look for opportunities during class discussions to draw out what your students were saying to themselves during activities or events and, consequently, how those thoughts made them feel and what they did as a result of this. Please note that some people find it difficult to remember what they were thinking or seeing in their mind, and some people get ‘thoughts’ and ‘feelings’ confused, e.g. ‘I felt I wasn’t good enough’ is in fact a thought, not a feeling.

Here are some examples of helpful and unhelpful self-talk relevant to Sense of Self-worth:
Teaching Suggestions

HOW MANY ACTIVITIES?
Select and deliver as many activities as you think necessary to allow your students to understand and have sufficient practice at applying aspects of Sense of Self-worth. If you feel your students have grasped a point well, you may decide delivering more activities or persisting with discussion is ‘overcooking’ the information. You are the best judge.

NON-PARTICIPATION
Some students, with good reason, may not wish to participate in either activities or discussion.

This non-participation should be seen as a valid response to the material; it does not necessarily mean the student is not gaining insight from your delivery or other students’ participation. Allowing the student to observe is often the best course.

SENSITIVE ISSUES
Some activities or discussion points may cause distress to some vulnerable students. Vetting activities and references beforehand, and thorough debriefing when necessary, should decrease this risk.

SELF-WORTH IN THE CLASS AND SCHOOL
Sense of Self-worth can be strengthened or weakened in the classroom. Be mindful of any comments you might make regarding students’ contributions in class, and also try to challenge unhelpful comments that students might make about themselves, their work, or about others. Look for opportunities to value students just for their own uniqueness, not their performance. For students reluctant to share their feelings about themselves with the class, consider adapting activities so they deal with examples in the third person instead. Very importantly, communicate to students that having healthy self-worth is not the same as having an inflated ego.
Activity Delivery

Each SenseAbility module offers around 20 classroom activities for you to choose from. Each activity is designed to provide an experience which you and your students can discuss to gain new understanding about how particular life ‘Senses’ apply in practical ways.

Activity Name
All activities in this module are listed alphabetically in the Classroom Activities Guide (p.47).

Time
This is an approximate duration of the activity, including basic discussion.

Size
A guide to student group size – some activities are for individuals, some work best in pairs, some require a whole class.

Space
Most activities are designed for a typical classroom. Some require room for students to mingle or move, and some work better in larger areas.

High Noon Balloons

ACTIVITY: HIGH NOON BALLOONS

TIME: One to five minutes
SIZE: Individual activity most fun when done as whole of class
SPACE: For students to move around
RESOURCES: Marking pens, four inflatable balloons per student, pens, paper

The aim is to place students in a pressured situation where they will eventually lose control.

The result should be discussion about the need to regulate emotions, speak helpfully to ourselves, and prioritise commitments in order to minimise feelings of stress.

Instructions

2. Give students one minute to list on paper four things they often feel are beyond their control (e.g. deadlines, family commitments, corporate greed, mobile phone bills, etc.).
3. Have them write their four stressors on their balloons (one per balloon), and to write the corresponding rating number (1-4) on each balloon.
4. Now comes the tricky part: students must try to blow up their four balloons and keep them aloft without any of them touching the ground – but they must do this one at a time, i.e. Number 1 balloon will be easy: they simply inflate it and throw it up into the air, but they must keep hitting it up with one hand while they inflate the Number 2 balloon and tie it off, then launch it. Then they must keep two balloons off the ground while they inflate the Number 3 balloon and do so on. Students who let their balloons hit the floor should retire from the playing area to let students with their balloons still aloft have more room.
5. Students who let their balloons hit the floor should retire from the playing area to let students with their balloons still aloft have more room.
6. Students who let their balloons hit the floor should retire from the playing area to let students with their balloons still aloft have more room.
7. The activity ends when the last student finally loses control and his/her balloons touch the floor.

Discussion Suggestions

- What thoughts, feelings and physical symptoms did students experience during the exercise? E.g. racing heart, excitement, anger, frustration, giggling, etc.
- Did these seem voluntary or involuntary? Why do you think that was?
- What were you saying to yourself during the activity? Was this self-talk helpful or unhelpful?
- What were you thinking about in terms of your limitations, and accept that perhaps you can only handle two or three ‘balloons’ at a time?
- Did these strategies help successful players (i.e., those who got the most balloons inflated and/or kept them off the ground the longest) employ? Did these involve overcoming instinctive emotional reactions and using thinking skills? If so, what were they?
- How is this activity similar to real life?
- What strategies did successful players (i.e., those who got the most balloons inflated and/or kept them off the ground the longest) employ? Did these involve overcoming instinctive emotional reactions and using thinking skills? If so, what were they?
- Discuss the importance of 1) regulating knee-jerk emotional reactions, 2) helpful self-talk, and 3) prioritising tasks in our lives.

Resources
Copiable and printable pages are included in the back of each module and on the SenseAbility CD. Other resources are generally not difficult to source – these include school equipment like sports mats, and readily purchasable items like drinking straws or balloons. Resources like pens, paper and glue are listed, but are assumed to be typical to most classrooms.

Aims & Results
A basic summary of what students should gain from this activity.
SENSE OF SELF-WORTH is knowledge and belief in your strengths, qualities, and abilities, and an acceptance of your inherent value and individuality. Building and maintaining a belief in the value of the essential ‘you’ can help you face life’s changes and challenges more effectively. Self-worth is particularly important during transitional phases in your life.

FOR TEACHERS

• Self-worth can be strengthened (or weakened) in the classroom.
• Challenge unhelpful comments that students might make about themselves or their work.
• Look for opportunities to value students just for their uniqueness (not their performance).

MESSAGES FOR STUDENTS

• Self-worth is a measure of how you regard yourself – you are your own best friend, and valuing yourself is important.
• Strong self-worth is NOT the same as having a huge ego; it is about recognising that you are every bit as valuable as anyone else in the world, and that you have unique things to offer and share.
• You can have strong self-worth without having stand-out skills – there are lots of qualities that are valued (e.g. manners, thoughtfulness, determination, consideration, patience). You don’t have to be a sports star, a glamour model, or a science wiz to feel that you have great worth.
• Self-worth affects almost every aspect of your life – home, school, and social. If you don’t find qualities in yourself that you think are important, you run the risk of closing yourself off from others, and from enjoyable and rewarding parts of life.

ACTIONS THAT MIGHT HELP STRENGTHEN YOUR SENSE OF SELF-WORTH

• Every day, find one thing you like about yourself. Write it down.
• Focus on your strengths, not things you perceive as failings or weaknesses. Everybody has both, but the happiest people are those who focus on their strengths.
• Value your own uniqueness. Remember, there is absolutely no one else like you.
• Accept that we all make mistakes – they are not the end of you or the world. To err is human. It’s how we learn.
• Be a good friend to yourself. Imagine something a great friend might do for you, then go and do that for yourself.
• Think about the role you play in the lives of others, e.g. as daughter/brother/teammate/pet-owner. Remind yourself that you are important to them.
While it is up to you how you deliver Sense of Self-worth, there are two main options:

**Suggested Program**: a detailed, step-by-step program in your choice of either three or five 45-minute (or longer) sessions.

**Flexible Delivery**: select and deliver as many activities and applications as you see fit to deliver a solid understanding of the material.

### Delivery Options & Flowchart

**START: Read this Module fully**

**Foundation Session** (p.13)
It is recommended that all students undertake this session regardless of delivery mode.
- Core Activity
- Introduce Sense of Self-worth
- Personal Reflection
- Introduce Real-life Application

**Suggested Program**

**3-Session Delivery**

**Session 2** (p.21)
- Classroom Activity
- Text- or Film/TV-based Discussion
- Review Progress of Real-life Application

**Session 3** (p.25)
(PARTS A, B, C & D)
- Classroom Activity (A)
- Review Outcomes of Real-life Application (B)
- Review of Understanding (C)
- Distribute Hand-out (D)

**Suggested Program**

**5-Session Delivery**

**Session 2** (p.21)
- Classroom Activity
- Text- or Film/TV-based Discussion
- Review Progress of Real-life Application

**Session 3** (p.25)
(PARTS A, E & F only)
- Classroom Activity (A)
- Classroom Activity (E)
- Review Progress of Real-life Application (F)

**Session 4** (p.31)
- Classroom Activity
- Classroom Activity
- Review Progress of Real-life Application

**Session 5** (p.35)
- Classroom Activity
- Review Outcomes of Real-life Application
- Review of Understanding
- Distribute Hand-out

**Fully Flexible Delivery**

Choose either or both:
- Classroom Activities
- Real-life Applications

Choose activities and applications most suited to your students’ current needs and/or curriculum stream. The Classroom Activities Guide (p.47) will assist.

**Suggested Texts** p.44
**Suggested Films & TV** p.45
**Real-life Applications** p.46
**Classroom Activities Guide** p.47

Every session, check the progress of the Real-life Application introduced in the Foundation Session.

**Final Review Session**
- Review Outcomes of Real-life Application
- Review of Understanding
- Distribute Hand-out

**Have all chosen Sense modules been delivered?**

**Final recap/review of covered Senses and their importance**

**Proceed to deliver the next chosen SenseAbility module**
Foundation Session

NB: It is highly recommended that this session be delivered to all students regardless of whether you have chosen a suggested program or flexible delivery.

A. Core Activity  
   (5–10 minutes)
B. Introduce Sense of Self-worth  
   (10 minutes)
C. Personal Reflection  
   (10–30 minutes)
D. Introduce Real-life Application  
   (5+ minutes)
A. Core Activity

NOTE TO TEACHERS:
The first activity in this session is the Core Activity ‘Compose a Poem’. Its aim is to illustrate to students how their thoughts about an event affect their feelings and actions. This understanding is fundamental to all other activities in the Sense of Self-worth Module.

If you have already delivered ‘Compose a Poem’ with another SenseAbility module (perhaps in another form, such as ‘Give Me a Song’ in Sense of Belonging), two alternative core activities for Sense of Self-worth are offered on p.16.

ACTIVITY: ‘COMPOSE A POEM’

TIME: 5–10 minutes
SIZE: Whole of class
SPACE: No special requirements
RESOURCES: A-B-C-D Model (p.54 or SenseAbility CD)

The aim is to allow students to experience a situation where their thoughts about an event affect their feelings. The result should be that students understand that they can control the way they think about events where they might be tempted to speak critically to themselves – and therefore feel better and take more positive actions.

1. Tell your students that, to set the tone for Sense of Self-worth, everyone is to compose on the spot a poem listing six good qualities about themselves. You (the teacher) say you will randomly pick four people from the class to stand up the front to read their poem.*

2. Explain that everyone has five minutes to compose a poem incorporating their six good qualities. Students are NOT to talk with their classmates in this time.

3. Pretend to be busy with notes/work but try to observe your students’ reactions.

4. After one minute has elapsed, stop your students (no one will be making up any poems; this was an experiment to gauge students’ responses to a specific event, but do not tell the class this yet).

5. Commence class discussion using the tables below.

LIST STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

6. On the board draw up a five-column table. Label the first column ‘A: Event’ and write beneath it the only entry for that column: ‘Asked to recite own poem in front of the class’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Event</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASKED TO RECITE OWN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POEM IN FRONT OF THE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLASS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Label the third and fourth columns ‘Emotions’ and ‘Bodily Symptoms’ under the broader title ‘C: Feelings’, and ask students: What were you feeling during the activity minute (e.g. anxious, excited, angry, unconcerned)? What was happening to your body (e.g. increased heart rate, sweaty palms, tense muscles)? Write the various answers in columns three and four.

8. Label the fifth column ‘D: Behaviour’ and ask those same students: What were you doing during the minute (e.g. fidgeting, looking around at friends/others, avoiding eye contact with the teacher)? Write responses in column five.

*You can substitute another activity for this, so long as it is likely to evoke a wide range of reactions in your students.

(cont.)
9. Label the second column ‘B: Thoughts’ and ask the same students: What was going through your mind when you were told that you might have to stand up and compose a poem (e.g. ‘This is unfair’, ‘This is exciting!’; ‘I’ll die of embarrassment’, ‘I’m good at poetry’)? Write responses in column two.

**EXAMPLE RESPONSES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Event</th>
<th>B: Thoughts</th>
<th>C: Feelings</th>
<th>D: Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asked to recite own poem in front of the class</td>
<td>I’ll make a fool of myself</td>
<td>Anxious, Embarrassed</td>
<td>Look to friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t pick me!</td>
<td>Apprehensive</td>
<td>Look down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is stupid/unfair</td>
<td>Angry, Annoyed</td>
<td>Avoid teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’m good at poetry</td>
<td>Calm, A bit excited</td>
<td>Glare at teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sweaty, Churning</td>
<td>Protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pale, Knotted Stomach</td>
<td>Work on poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flushed, Clawed Jaw</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alert Muscles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heart Rate Up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. The table now completed, discuss how there were some very different reactions among the class to the **same** event.

11. You can now explain this was an experiment to gauge student’s responses to a specific event.

12. Project the A-B-C-D Model as an OHT or give students a printed copy and explain how people can think differently about the **same event** and consequently have different feelings and actions. In other words, it is not the event but your **interpretation** of the event that leads to emotions and behaviours; you can change your feelings by changing your thinking. Therefore, challenging unhelpful thoughts and generating alternative, helpful ways to think is an important way to help manage stress and curb unhelpful emotional reactions.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- Highlight that a whole raft of different responses – anger, nervousness, excitement – all resulted from the one common event. What caused you all to feel and act in different ways was how you each thought about the event.
- Brainstorm some thoughts that might challenge unhelpful self-talk for this activity (e.g. ‘Maybe I’ll actually come up with something good’ or ‘At least I’m not the only one, we’re all in the same boat’). What feelings might these more helpful thoughts have resulted in?
- Brainstorm some other real-life instances where people might have a variety of reactions to the same event. Try to predict the likely feelings and actions that result from various ways of thinking. Which thoughts would be helpful, and which would be unhelpful to the situation? Which thoughts would be most beneficial to the person’s overall goal (e.g. to be happy; to do a good job)?
- Brainstorm a list of events that have the potential for you to feel stressed and to question your self-worth (e.g. not doing well in a test, asking someone for a date and being turned down). But remember the amount of stress and anxiety you **feel** is linked directly to how you **think** about the event. So, changing the way you think is the most effective way to control your feelings and actions, and to reduce stress and anxiety.
- If any student has composed a poem they’d like to share, now is a good time to do so.
WHAT IS SENSE OF SELF-WORTH?

Explain that your Sense of Self-worth is a measure of how you value yourself. It isn’t about having a big ego, nor about how good you are at things, what you own, or what you look like. It is about valuing yourself for who you are, not what you do.

KEY FEATURES

Having a Sense of Self-worth means that you:

• value yourself for who you are
• know you are not defined by just one or two skills or aspects
• acknowledge that you are also valued by other people
• can appreciate other people’s uniqueness
• speak to yourself in a helpful, realistic way that challenges unhelpful thoughts.

WHAT IT PROVIDES

• Confidence to try new things, meet new people, and fully enjoy life.
• Lets you feel good just for being you.
• Feelings of uniqueness and strong self-value.
• Helps place events/challenges into perspective.
• Protection against feelings of anxiety or depression.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• How do you think you could spot a person with a strong Sense of Self-worth? What characteristics might you look for?
• How might you identify a person struggling with their Sense of Self-worth?
• What personal qualities might go toward building a strong Sense of Self-worth?
• What might a person with a healthy sense of Self-worth say to themselves in a variety of challenging situations such as:
  • starting at a new school
  • asking someone that they like on a date
  • signing up for auditions/sports tryouts
  • going for an interview for a part-time job
  • failing a driving test.
• Brainstorm some people who have gone through some challenging events (e.g. burns survivor Sophie Delezio; Auschwitz survivor Primo Levi; disability activist, the late Matt Laffan). What qualities do you think they believe/d they have/had? How does that reflect strong Self-worth?
• What is the difference between having a healthy Sense of Self-worth and having an inflated ego? What is ‘Tall Poppy Syndrome’ and where does it come from?
C. Personal Reflection

**ACTIVITY: ‘I AM A PENCIL’**

**TIME:** 10–30 minutes  
**SIZE:** Individuals  
**SPACE:** Room to both sit and move around  
**RESOURCES:** Pens and paper

The aim is to think about an object in a helpful, positive way, and then for students to apply that thinking to themselves.  

The result should be an appreciation that each of us can discover that we have a number of very good qualities we might not have previously considered.

1. Bring the class into a quiet, focused mood and have everyone look around the room and silently choose an object (e.g. pencil, clock, chair, air-conditioner, shoe).

2. Everyone now thinks about that object. Is it unique or common? What is its purpose: utilitarian, artistic, informational? How might it feel to be that object?

3. Everyone now lists three undesirable qualities about that object. For instance, if it is a pencil, undesirable qualities might be that it is common, uninteresting, and easily broken.

4. Ask students to take a moment to assume those negative qualities are their own. Have them take a minute, and quickly write down how possessing those negative qualities might make them feel (e.g. low, unhappy, unmotivated).

5. Now ask everyone to write a counter-list of three or more good qualities about the same object e.g. if it is a pencil, they might write that it is sharp, colourful, and reliable.

6. Now ask students to assume these good qualities as their own. Have them take a moment to quickly write down how possessing these good qualities makes them feel (e.g. energised, confident, capable).

7. Quickly go around the class, asking (some or all) students to introduce themselves and their good qualities, e.g. ‘Hi, I’m Jamie. I am a pencil. I am sharp, colourful, and reliable!’

8. Stop the activity. Commence discussion.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- Was it easy or hard to think of some negative qualities for your object?
- Was it easy or hard to think of some good qualities for your object?
- What were some of the feelings that you associated with the negative qualities?
- What were some of the feelings that you associated with the good qualities?
- How easy do you think it might be to think up three good qualities about yourself? (Consider trying this if time permits.) Is it easier or harder to list your good qualities than to be self-critical? Why might that be?
- Discuss the importance of challenging unhelpful self-talk with helpful self-talk (refer back to the helpful/unhelpful thought table on p.7).

NB: If you feel your students could use some extra help challenging unhelpful thoughts and self-talk, consider delivering the Helpul Thinking & Self-talk Units in the SenseAbility Essential Skills Module.
D. Introduce Real-life Application

The aim of Real-life Applications is for your students to apply what they have learned about Sense of Self-worth to life outside the classroom. This should provide opportunities to utilise thinking and group interaction skills that enhance their own Sense of Self-worth.

There are three options:
1. **Shorter-term activity** to run over approx. two school weeks if you are doing the 3-Session Delivery.
2. **Longer-term activity** to run over approx. four school weeks if you are doing the 5-Session Delivery.
3. **Create your own** activity to suit the needs and timeframes of your students.

Results of this activity:
- In each subsequent Sense of Self-worth session review the progress of this activity.
- In your final Sense of Self-worth session facilitate an in-depth class discussion about the activity and its effect on individuals’ Sense of Self-worth.

**OPTION 1: CREATE A SELF-BROCHURE**
(Duration: approx. two weeks*)

NB: Activity is for individuals, but you might consider having students work in pairs and create a brochure about their partner instead of themselves.

1. Students are to create a brochure – not unlike a fancy travel brochure – promoting their unique qualities.
2. Have students go to travel bureaus, libraries, anywhere that they can find interesting promotional brochures that they can use as inspiration.
3. The brochures can be done either in a software program like MS Publisher, or can be made by hand using scissors and glue.
4. Students are to think about their own qualities – not just skills! – that they believe are valuable to themselves and to others. It might pay to think about qualities that potential employers might find desirable (e.g. polite and thoughtful; enjoys being outside; takes good care of siblings/pet/grandparent).
5. Consider what kind of pictures will ‘speak’ most effectively about these qualities.

(*adjust as necessary)

**OPTION 2: RATE YOUR SENSE OF SELF-WORTH**
(Duration: approx. four weeks*)

NB: Activity is for individuals.

1. Over the next four weeks*, students keep a daily visual diary of their Sense of Self-worth.
2. There are many ways to do this – one approach is the table shown below.

### EXAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>SELF-WORTH</th>
<th>Event(s)</th>
<th>Thoughts (self-talk)</th>
<th>(NB: leave blank for now)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td></td>
<td>MATHS TEST</td>
<td>I DID REALLY WELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td>ARGUMENT WITH MUM</td>
<td>SHE NEVER LISTENS TO ME</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>LET A GOAL IN DURING SOCCER</td>
<td>I SHOULD PRACTICE MORE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. At the end of the activity students will analyse their chart and see if there is any correlation between their Sense of Self-worth, events that occurred, and what they said to themselves about those events.
4. Students should now fill in the last column (left blank till now) with more suggestions for thoughts they could have used to challenge unhelpful thoughts at moments when their self-worth was low.
5. Alternatively, students could create a more fluid map that uses the four themes associated with Sense of Self-worth (see p.5) as ‘islands’ on which they can write daily thoughts/events.

(*adjust as necessary)
Suggested Program
For delivery over three or five sessions
Session 2

2A. Classroom Activity
   (10–15 minutes)

2B. Text- or Film/TV-based Discussion
   (25+ minutes)

2C. Review Progress of Real-life Application from Foundation Session
   (5 minutes)
2A. Classroom Activity

ACTIVITY: ‘MY ADJECTIVE’

**TIME:** 10–15 minutes

**SIZE:** Large groups/whole of class

**SPACE:** Room to form large circle/s

**RESOURCES:** Tennis ball

The aim is to create a situation where students must think instinctively about themselves in positive ways.

The result should be discussion about the tools that can help students speak helpfully to themselves in day-to-day situations.

1. Have students form a large circle.

2. Everyone is to come up with adjectives for themselves that begin with the same first letter of their first name. The important thing is that the adjectives be both positive and true.

3. Whenever the tennis ball is thrown to them, the student must introduce him/herself with their adjective and name, e.g. ‘Hi, I’m Jolly John’. John must then throw the ball to another person who must reiterate the thrower’s name and introduce him/herself e.g. ‘Hi Jolly John, I’m Reliable Renee.’ Renee then throws the ball to Charlie who says, ‘Hi Reliable Renee, I’m Cheerful Charlie’, etc.

4. Commence the activity by throwing the tennis ball to someone.

5. NB: if the adjective is known to be untrue or is unduly negative (e.g. Ugly Ursula) then you and the group can shout, ‘No!’ and demand the student try again until they come up with a positive adjective. Multiple words (e.g. Fun-to-be-with Fred) are admissible at your discretion.

6. Keep the activity going until everyone has had at least one, and preferably two, attempts at coming up with positive adjectives that describe themselves.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- Who had the best/most appropriate/funniest adjective?
- Was it easy or hard to come up with the adjectives on the spot? Why/why not? Did you feel comfortable coming up with your adjective? If not, why not?
- Why in our society is it often awkward to speak well of ourselves? Is that healthy or unhealthy?
- Why is it sometimes easier to find good qualities in other people than it is in ourselves?
- What strategies (thinking skills) did people use during the exercise? How could you use those in everyday life?

Consider repeating the activity, but instead of students coming up with adjectives for themselves, the person who catches the ball must come up with a positive adjective for the person who threw it to them. Discuss what students thought and felt when they were well described by their peers, and how they might turn those helpful comments into helpful self-talk.
2B. Text- or Film/TV-Based Discussion

Choose a Suggested Text or a Film/TV Program to discuss from pages 44 or 45, respectively. Alternatively, select a book, poem, film, or TV program that you or your students are already familiar with.

You can guide discussion using the suggested discussion points included with the summaries, or you can conduct class discussion in your own way about how the text/clip you’ve selected relates to Sense of Self-worth.

2C. Review Progress of Real-life Application

Commence a class discussion about your students’ progress on their chosen Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18) – either the Self-Brochure, the visual Self-worth diary, or another activity you have chosen.

It is important to ensure the discussion remains centred on Sense of Self-worth.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Create a Self-Brochure

- What new discoveries have you made about the way you think about yourself and your personal qualities?
- Was it easy or difficult to decide what to put in the brochure? Why/why not?
- Has the activity made you more conscious about how other people may regard you? Why/why not?
- Has the activity changed the way you look at other people? How?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Rate Your Sense of Self-worth

- How has bringing self-talk to the front of your mind affected your own Sense of Self-worth?
- Have you found you speak to yourself regularly? Is your self-talk generally helpful or unhelpful? Have you been challenging unhelpful self-talk? What is the result?
- Are there particular types of events that seem to make you speak to yourself in certain ways?
- Have you been able to challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk? What strategies worked? What other strategies might also work?
Session 3

3-SESSION DELIVERY

3A. Classroom Activity
   (15+ minutes) p.26

3B. Review Outcomes of
   Real-life Application from
   Foundation Session
   (10–15 minutes) p.28

3C. Review of Understanding
   (10–15 minutes) p.28

3D. Distribute Hand-out
   (5 minutes) p.28

END OF SENSE OF
SELF-WORTH MODULE

5-SESSION DELIVERY

3A. Classroom Activity
   (15 minutes) p.26

(NB: skip 3B, 3C, and 3D)

3E. Classroom Activity
   (10+ minutes) p.29

3F. Review Progress of
   Real-life Application
   from Foundation Session
   (5 minutes) p.29

COMMENCE SESSION 4
ACTIVITY: ‘OUR SPECIAL GUEST’

TIME: 15+ minutes  
SIZE: Large groups/whole of class  
SPACE: To arrange desks like a quiz show  
RESOURCES: Pens and paper

The aim is for students to challenge unhelpful thoughts during a scenario. The result should be that students learn thinking skills to help them challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk in their day-to-day lives.

1. This activity takes the form of a talk show, where six panellists pass comment on three different people with fictional scenarios below. The audience should be participatory.

2. Divide students into these groups:
   - three ‘unhelpful’ panellists
   - three ‘helpful’ panellists
   - three scenario individuals
   - one compere
   - remaining students are audience members.

3. Have the first scenario individual read out or paraphrase their situation (you can use the scenarios provided, or make up your own).

4. The ‘unhelpful’ panellists provide ‘unhelpful’ ways to think about the scenario – ways of thinking that are sure to undermine the individual in question’s Sense of Self-worth.

5. The ‘helpful’ panellists must then counter these unhelpful thoughts with helpful ways of thinking or self-talking about the scenario.

6. Applause from the audience determines the most successful way to think about the scenario.

7. Consider changing the panellists with each new scenario to ensure a large number of students get to practise their thinking skills.

SCENARIO 1

Danika has just received a phone call from a prospective employer – she hasn’t got the job she applied for. This is the fifth interview she’s gone to.

SCENARIO 2

Lars heard that his friends were going on a canoeing trip, and became very excited. He checked with his boss at his part-time job and he was free the long weekend of the trip. But his friends never invited him!

SCENARIO 3

Neroli thinks her older sister’s friend Jen is very cool. She plays guitar, writes her own songs, and has just started studying art history at university. But last time Jen was over at the house, she was rude and dismissive of Neroli.
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Which was easier: coming up with helpful or unhelpful ways to think about the scenarios? Why might that be?
• What were some of the standout helpful suggestions?
• Who has ever been in a situation like one of the scenario individuals? What were you thinking at the time? What did you do? After today, might you do things differently?
• In what ways were the panellists like your own brain? Why do we seem to have the ability to think about things in both unhelpful and helpful ways? What strategies could you use to tip the balance in favour of your brain’s ‘helpful’ panellists?
• Shows with panellists that give positive feedback are now rating better than shows with super-critical panellists. What habits can you get into to ensure you give yourself more positive and less critical feedback?
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Create a Self-Brochure

- How did consciously thinking about your own qualities in detail affect your Sense of Self-worth?
- Was it easy or hard to bring to mind positive thoughts about yourself?
- Did you learn anything surprising about yourself?
- What did you learn about the way you think about challenging events in your life? Do you think that this has changed after the process of this activity? Why/why not?
- Has the process given you any tools that you have used in other areas of your life?
- What might be some good strategies that you have learned from this process that you can use in everyday life?
- Encourage students to keep their brochures to help them feel good about themselves in the future.

3C. Review of Understanding

This is your chance to evaluate whether your students can demonstrate a solid understanding about the importance of Sense of Self-worth in their lives.

Use the Module Goals as a check list. Can your students:

1. DEFINE Sense of Self-worth?
2. UNDERSTAND what a Sense of Self-worth provides them with?
3. IDENTIFY the key features of Sense of Self-worth?
4. IDENTIFY aspects of Sense of Self-worth within themselves and how important the sense is in their own lives?
5. RECOGNISE how strong their own Sense of Self-worth is, and their capacity to enhance it?
6. UNDERSTAND that their thoughts about events – not the events themselves – affect their feelings and behaviours, and that they have the ability to change those thoughts?
7. PRACTISE and APPLY their understanding and knowledge about Sense of Self-worth in real life?

There are many ways you may choose to check your students’ understanding about Sense of Self-worth, including a written evaluation (e.g. a short creative essay or quiz), class discussion or even role-play.

Now is also an excellent time to brainstorm as a class some ways that your students may be able to enhance their own Sense of Self-worth.

If you feel your students require more work simply:

- select other activities you haven’t already done using the Classroom Activities Guide (p.47)
- select and discuss other Suggested Texts (p.44) or Films/TV Programs (p.45)
- find or create your own activities and discussion references to help build understanding about Sense of Self-worth.

3D. Distribute Hand-out

A hand-out summarising Sense of Self-worth is included as a photocopiable page in the Activities & Resources section (p.53) and also in PDF on the SenseAbility CD.

1. Distribute one per student.
2. Consider a closing discussion about seeking help and the places where someone struggling with their Sense of Self-worth might find such help (e.g. trusted friends and adults, school counsellor, medical professionals, Lifeline, Kids Helpline).
**ACTIVITY: ‘I’M NOT PERFECT, BUT …’**

**TIME:** 10+ minutes  
**SIZE:** Individuals  
**SPACE:** For individuals to write  
**RESOURCES:** Pen, paper, hat/bucket (optional)

NB: If students are struggling to find good qualities about themselves, you may need to remind them that their uniqueness is itself a truly valuable quality.

**The aim** is for students to carefully consider their positive qualities and characteristics.  
**The result** should be an improved ability for students to access those positive, affirming thoughts about themselves in their day-to-day lives.

1. Have students imagine a world where no one wants for anything material – what people crave and value highly is genuine human interaction and positive relationships.
2. Students are to write eBay-style advertisements – but the products they are putting up for bid are themselves as friends. They each have just 40 words to think about the qualities that they possess that would make them an excellent friend for the successful highest bidder.
3. Stress that these advertisements must be truthful.
4. Students draft their advertisements. Allow no more than 10 minutes for the creative process.
5. Consider having students write their ads on small slips of paper and put them into a hat/bucket. The slips can be drawn and read aloud one-by-one – students need only admit to authorship if they are comfortable doing so.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- This activity was a fiction, and true friendships cannot be bought or sold. But in real life, friendship does have rewards and costs – what are some?
- In what ways do good friendships strengthen one’s Sense of Self-worth?
- In what ways could relationships with critical people undermine a Sense of Self-worth?
- What qualities do you admire in your friends?
- Did you find it easy or hard to think about the qualities that make you a good friend? Why/why not?
- Did thinking about your qualities make you feel better about yourself? If so, how can you use what you’ve learned in this activity in your day-to-day life?

**3F. Review Progress of Real-life Application**

Commence a class discussion about your students’ progress on their chosen Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18). It is important to ensure the discussion remains centred on Sense of Self-worth.
Session 4

SUGGESTED PROGRAM – SESSION 4

4A. Classroom Activity
(15+ minutes)

4B. Classroom Activity
(15+ minutes)

4C. Review Progress of Real-life Application from Foundation Session
(5 minutes)
ACTIVITY: ‘REPEATING GAME’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Pairs in front of class/large groups
SPACE: For pairs to sit and others to observe
RESOURCES: Nil

NB: This activity can work with the whole class watching one pair at work or, if you are confident in your students, it can work with multiple sets of pairs being observed by smaller groups. Encourage pairings where the students don’t know each other well.

The aim is for students to think about unique qualities in another person.

The result should be an appreciation that each of us is unique and has his or her own interests and value systems.

1. Break the class into pairs, or bring a demonstration pair to the front of the class.

2. Pair/s sit opposite one another in a calm, respectful mood.

3. One student starts: he/she will offer an observation about the other to do with qualities they think the other is likely to have. For instance: ‘You look like you’d be polite to strangers.’

4. The opposite student should now either agree or disagree, e.g. ‘I am polite to strangers, and you look like you think deeply about things.’

5. Guidance may be needed to ensure the observations don’t become critical or dissolve into laughter.

6. The first student then agrees or disagrees and responds with a second observation, e.g. ‘I don’t really think too deeply about things, and you look like you enjoy being outdoors’.

7. The round continues until you decide fruitful observations have been made, or when students run out of steam.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• What does this activity suggest about the old saying, ‘You can’t judge a book by its cover’?

• For those who were in pairs, how hard was it to guess qualities about your partner? Did it get harder or easier as the round progressed? Why might that be?

• For those who were in pairs, how did it feel to have somebody making observations about your qualities?

• How did it feel to repeat aloud your partner’s observations about you? Did that affect your Sense of Self-worth? How?

• Was it uncomfortable to repeat aloud observations made about you? Why/why not?

• Observers: What did you notice about the activity? In what way was the activity like real/everyday life?

• If you were to do the activity in the mirror, what would you say?
SCENARIO-BASED HELP — WHAT WERE THEY THINKING?

**TIME:** 15+ minutes  
**SIZE:** Small groups  
**SPACE:** No special requirements  
**RESOURCES:** Newspaper/magazine articles, paper, pens

The aim is for students to apply aspects of what they have learned about Sense of Self-worth to real-life circumstances.

The result should be that students have opportunities to enhance skills for building/maintaining their own Sense of Self-worth.

1. Break the class into small groups of two to four students.
2. Distribute newspapers/magazines/news website printouts.
3. Have each group choose an article to review. The subject of the article might be a politician, sports player, musician, or someone previously unknown. Preferably the subject has just experienced an event that might have had an effect on their Sense of Self-worth (e.g. a low opinion poll for a politician, a drink-driving scandal for a sports star).
4. Have each group consider the incident in question, then have them ‘rate’ the subject's Sense of Self-worth before, during, and after the incident reported. Have them also write down the reasons for their ratings.
5. Students might write down some alternative ‘challenge statements’ that their subjects might have used in place of critical or unhelpful comments or self-talk.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Do you think your subject's Sense of Self-worth would have changed as a result of the incident? Why?/why not?
- How might your subject be able to build up his/her Sense of Self-worth after the incident?
- How are potentially damaging incidents magnified when other people (in this case, the media and viewing public) know about it?
- Discuss how the media can represent a person as either a star or a villain. How can people in the public eye keep their Sense of Self-worth solid in the face of such scrutiny? Can any of those strategies assist you in your life?
- In what ways can our thoughts be like the media commenting on our actions? How should we respond to ‘critical reporting’?
- Even when we make mistakes and/or feel disappointed about our behaviour, it is still very important to recognise that we have value. What might be some good thinking strategies in these kinds of circumstances?
Commence a class discussion about your students’ progress on their chosen Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18). It is important to ensure the discussion remains centred on Sense of Self-worth.
Session 5

5A. Classroom Activity
   (15+ minutes)

5B. Review Outcomes of Real-life Application from Foundation Session
   (10+ minutes)

5C. Review of Understanding
   (10+ minutes)

5D. Distribute Hand-out
   (5 minutes)
ACTIVITY: ‘MY LOGO’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Individuals
SPACE: For individuals to work
RESOURCES: Paper, pens, or computer

The aim is for students to consider positive aspects of themselves and then express these graphically. The result should be an appreciation that self-worth can be bolstered through conscious effort.

1. Briefly discuss well-known corporate logos and what they convey/signify (e.g. Apple, Rolls Royce, Qantas). Why are logos important to companies? How do positive aspects of a company become associated with a logo? What considerations do designers take into account (e.g. look at Michael Bryce’s design for the 2000 Olympics)?

2. Each student is to design his/her own logo. The logos should encapsulate qualities that they like about themselves. They perhaps need to list these qualities before deciding on things like form, colour, etc.

3. Ask students who are comfortable doing so to present their finished logos to the class along with their design rationale. Consider showing some of the logos to the class and having students try to guess their creator.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• If a stranger found your logo on a billboard, what are three things you’d like that person to interpret it to mean about you?

• What did you consider when you started thinking about your logo?

• Why are we sometimes better at isolating the negatives in ourselves rather than the positives? What steps can we take to overcome that mindset?

• What surprises did you come up with about yourself?

• How hard was it to make the final decision about the form of the logo? Why/why not?

• Do logos remain fixed? Why do some remain unchanged for decades (e.g. BMW) and others change/evolve regularly (Qantas)? When or why would your logo change? What would those changes say about you?
5B. Review Outcomes of Real-life Application

In the 5-Session Delivery, this is your final Sense of Self-worth session. Commence a class discussion to review what your students learned from the Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18) ‘Rate Your Sense of Self-worth’. This is a good opportunity for students to fill in the last column where they can come up with helpful thoughts to challenge any unhelpful or critical self-talk.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Did you discover any relationship between your Sense of Self-worth, events in your life, and the way that you thought about those events?
- Can you see any patterns in the way that you speak to yourself? Is this self-talk helpful or unhelpful?
- What strategies might you use to improve your Sense of Self-worth at times when it is lower than you’d like it to be?
- How can you increase your ability to challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk, and replace them with thoughts that will improve your Sense of Self-worth?
- What are some good strategies that you have learned from this process that you can use in everyday life?

NB: If you feel your students could use some extra help challenging unhelpful thoughts and self-talk, consider delivering the Helpful Thinking and Self-Talk Units in the Sense Ability Essential Skills Module.

5C. Review of Understanding

This is your chance to evaluate whether your students can demonstrate a solid understanding about the importance of Sense of Self-worth in their lives.

To assist in this, use the seven Module Goals as a checklist. Can your students:

1. DEFINE Sense of Self-worth?
2. UNDERSTAND what a Sense of Self-worth provides them with?
3. IDENTIFY the key features of Sense of Self-worth?
4. IDENTIFY aspects of Sense of Self-worth within themselves and how important the sense is in their own lives?
5. RECOGNISE how strong their own Sense of Self-worth is, and their capacity to enhance it?
6. UNDERSTAND that their thoughts about events – not the events themselves – affect their feelings and behaviours, and they have the ability to change those thoughts?
7. PRACTISE and APPLY their understanding and knowledge about Sense of Self-worth in real life?

There are many ways you may choose to check your students understanding about Sense of Self-worth, including a written evaluation (e.g. a short creative essay or quiz), class discussion or even role-play.

Now is also an excellent time to brainstorm as a class some ways that your students may be able to enhance their own Sense of Self-worth.

If you feel your students require more work simply:

- select other activities you haven’t already done using the Classroom Activities Guide (p.47)
- select and discuss other Suggested Texts (p.44) or Films/TV Programs (p.45)
- find or create your own activities and discussion references to help build understanding about Sense of Self-worth.
5D. Distribute Hand-out

A hand-out summarising Sense of Self-worth is included as a photocopiable page in the Activities & Resources section (p.53) and in PDF on the SenseAbility CD.

1. Distribute one per student.
2. Consider a closing discussion about seeking help and the places where someone struggling with their Sense of Self-worth might find help (e.g. trusted friends and family, school counsellor, medical professionals, Kids Helpline, Lifeline).
Flexible Delivery

REMINDER
Ensure you have delivered the Foundation Session (p.13) before continuing

ONGOING SESSIONS
A. Review Progress of Real-life Application from the Foundation Session
B. Select/Create Classroom Activities and Lead Discussion

FINAL SESSION
C. Review Outcomes of Real-life Application from the Foundation Session
D. Review of Understanding
E. Distribute Hand-out (p.53)
How Many Sessions?

It is up to you how many sessions you now devote to completing the delivery of the Sense of Self-worth Module. You are the best judge of when your students have fulfilled the following seven Module Goals:

1. DEFINE Sense of Self-worth.
2. UNDERSTAND what a Sense of Self-worth provides them with.
3. IDENTIFY the key features of Sense of Self-worth.
4. IDENTIFY aspects of Sense of Self-worth within themselves and how important the sense is in their own lives.
5. RECOGNISE how strong their own Sense of Self-worth is, and their capacity to enhance it.
6. UNDERSTAND that their thoughts about events – not the events themselves – affect their feelings and behaviours, and they have the ability to change those thoughts.
7. PRACTISE and APPLY their understanding and knowledge about Sense of Self-worth in real life.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In each ongoing session:

- Review progress of the Real-life Application commenced in the Foundation Session (p.18)
- Select/create classroom activities and lead discussion.

In the final session:

- Review understanding about Sense of Self-worth
- Review outcomes of Real-life Application commenced in the Foundation Session (p.18)
- Distribute hand-out (p.53).

A. Review Progress of Real-life Application

Each session, you should make time for students to discuss their progress on their chosen Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18) – either the Self-Brochure, the visual Self-worth diary, or another activity you have chosen.

It is important to ensure the discussion remains centred on Sense of Self-worth.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Create a Self-Brochure

- What new discoveries have you made about the way you think about yourself and your personal qualities?
- Was it easy or difficult to decide what to put in the brochure? Why/why not?
- Has the activity made you more conscious about how other people may be regarding you? Why/why not?
- How has the activity changed the way you look at other people?

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Rate Your Sense of Self-worth

- How has bringing self-talk to the front of your mind affected your own Sense of Self-worth?
- Have you found you speak to yourself? Is your self-talk generally helpful or unhelpful? What is the result?
- Are there particular types of events that seem to make you speak to yourself in certain ways?
- Have you been able to challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk? What strategies might work?
Choose and facilitate activities and discussions that you think will help deliver a sound understanding about Sense of Self-worth and its importance in day-to-day life.

You can:

Choose from activities supplied in this module:
- Text-based Discussions (p.44)
- Film/TV-based Discussions (p.45)
- Real-life Applications (p.46)
- Classroom Activities (see Guide p.47)

AND/OR

Find or create your own classroom activities, develop your own Real-life Applications, and decide appropriate text, film or television references that students are already using or you are already familiar with.

Remember: the activities and references are only catalysts; the real learning benefits come through fruitful discussion where students can hear other perspectives and relate new knowledge to their own lives and experiences.

C. Review Outcomes of Real-life Application

Final Sense of Self-Worth Session

Conduct a class discussion to review what your students learned from the Real-life Application from the Foundation Session (p.18). This is a valuable opportunity for students to reflect on the importance of Sense of Self-worth in their everyday lives.

Consider asking willing students to share their brochure/chart with the rest of the class.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Create a Self-Brochure

- How did consciously thinking about your own qualities in detail affect your Sense of Self-worth?
- Was it easy or hard to bring to mind positive thoughts about yourself?
- Did you learn anything surprising about yourself?
- What did you learn about the way you think about challenging events in your life? Do you think that has changed after the process of this activity? Why/Why not?
- Has the process given you any tools that you have used in other areas of your life?
- What might be some good strategies that you have learned from this process that you can use in everyday life?
- Encourage students to keep their brochures to help them feel good about themselves in the future.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS — Rate Your Sense of Self-worth

- Did you discover any relationship between your Sense of Self-worth, events in your life, and the way that you thought about those events?
- Can you see any patterns in the way that you speak to yourself? Is this self-talk helpful or unhelpful?
- What strategies might you use to improve your Sense of Self-worth at times when it is lower than you’d like it to be?
- How can you increase your ability to challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk, and replace them with thoughts that will improve your Sense of Self-worth?
- What good strategies that you have learned from this process can you use in everyday life?

NB: If you feel your students could use some extra help challenging unhelpful thoughts and self-talk, consider delivering the Helpful Thinking & Self-talk Units in the Sense Ability Essential Skills Module.
D. Review of Understanding

Evaluate whether your students can demonstrate a solid understanding about the importance of Sense of Self-worth.

Can your students:

1. DEFINE Sense of Self-worth?
2. UNDERSTAND what a Sense of Self-worth provides them with?
3. IDENTIFY the key features of Sense of Self-worth?
4. IDENTIFY aspects of Sense of Self-worth within themselves and how important the sense is in their own lives?
5. RECOGNISE how strong their own Sense of Self-worth is, and their capacity to enhance it?
6. UNDERSTAND that their thoughts about events – not the events themselves – affect their feelings and behaviours, and they have the ability to change those thoughts?
7. PRACTISE and APPLY their understanding and knowledge about Sense of Self-worth in real life?

There are many ways you may choose to check your students’ understanding of Sense of Self-worth, including:

- short creative essay or quiz
- class discussion
- role-play.

Now is also an excellent time to brainstorm as a class on ways that your students may be able to enhance their own Sense of Self-worth.

If you feel your students haven’t met one or more of the Module Goals, consider conducting more activities and discussion to help build and reinforce their understanding of Sense of Self-worth.

E. Distribute Hand-out

A hand-out summarising Sense of Self-worth is included as a photocopiable page in the Activities & Resources section (p.53) and in PDF on the SenseAbility CD.

1. Distribute one per student.
2. Consider broader discussion about seeking help including the places where someone struggling with their Sense of Self-worth might find help (e.g. trusted friends and adults, school counsellor, medical professionals, Kids Helpline, Lifeline).
References & Guides
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>SUITABILITY</th>
<th>SYNOPSIS</th>
<th>POSSIBLE DISCUSSION POINTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| *Hamlet* (c.1600)              | William Shakespeare | All               | (fiction, stage play) A young Prince of Denmark is plagued by self-doubt and haunted by the ghost of his murdered father. He decides to seek revenge. | • What passages give us clues to how Hamlet regards himself (e.g. ‘No more like my father than I to Hercules’)? How would you rate his Sense of Self-worth?  
  • What is Hamlet’s fundamental inner-conflict? How does this affect his Sense of Self-worth? Why does he believe that avenging his father will have an impact on his ‘worth’?  
  • When Hamlet begins to think of his actions (or lack of action) as cowardly, how does this affect the way he feels about himself?  
  • What advice would you give Hamlet? Why?  |
| *Beauty Shop for Rent* (2007)  | Laura Bowers        | All (girls especially) | (fiction) Fourteen-year-old Abby is determined to take care of herself. But life gets complicated and she must come to terms with her mother’s desertion. | • Abby makes friendships with people outside her own generation. How important do those friendships prove? Why?  
  • Abby is fearful of defining herself by her progenitors – the women in her family who’ve come before her. What does she do to try to escape this?  
  • Does the way that Abby speaks to herself change through the course of the story? Why/why not? What events impact on the way she speaks to herself? Could she have spoken to herself in different ways?  |
| *Looking for Gatsby* (1995)    | Faye Dunaway        | All               | (autobiography) The life story of one of the twentieth century’s most acclaimed actors. She speaks of poverty, unhappiness, and struggle to assert her will. | • What effect did Dunaway’s poor upbringing have on the way she defined herself as a young woman?  
  • Why was Dunaway nicknamed the ‘gossamer grenade’? What did she think about this?  
  • Dunaway was regarded as one of the screen’s most beautiful women, yet looks did not make her happy. Why not? Was this healthy?  
  • What events (and the way Dunaway thought about them) served to strengthen her Sense of Self-worth?  |
| *Signaller Johnson’s Secret War* (1998) | Peter Pinney | Senior (≈15–18 y.o.) | (fiction) The story of an Australian commando fighting in New Guinea in WW2, who feels he faces two enemies: the Japanese, and his own superiors. | • How would you describe the character’s Sense of Self-worth throughout the book? Why? How important was that sense to the author’s very survival?  
  • How did events or actions, such as death and the callousness of superiors, affect the character’s Sense of Self-worth?  
  • The author Peter Pinney became a great traveller after WW2, touring a myriad of dangerous countries. How might his Sense of Self-worth have been valuable to him on these adventures?  |
| *Looking for Alaska* (2005)    | John Green          | Senior (≈15–18 y.o.) | (fiction) Miles Halter’s school life has been a big non-event until he moves to boarding school and meets a beautiful, confused girl, Alaska. | • How does Miles think of himself before he leaves home? How and why does this way of thinking change?  
  • How would you chart Miles’s Sense of Self-worth through the course of the story? What are the events that act as markers of those changes?  
  • Does the way Miles thinks about things (himself, the world) change when he meets Alaska? Why?  
  • How is Miles’ Sense of Self-worth affected by Alaska’s accident?  
  • What advice would you give Miles?  |

NB: Teachers should review suggested texts for suitability before use. You should feel free to use different texts that you think are more suited to your students’ needs or current study streams.
**POSSIBLE DISCUSSION POINTS**

- Discuss an event that has caused Arnold to rethink the way he regards himself. Was he thinking in a helpful or unhelpful way? How could he have thought about it differently? What might have happened?
- In what way do Gerald’s and/or Helga’s opinions of Arnold affect the way he values himself? Does relying on these opinions have a consequence?
- What makes Arnold unique? What qualities about him do you admire? What qualities do you admire about yourself?
- What does Arnold say to himself in order to help himself face a challenging situation? Does this work? Why/why not?
- What might you say or do in a similar situation? Why?

- How is Matilda unique? What elements of her personality can you relate to? Why?
- How does Matilda’s powers help her? In what ways do they fail to help her? What does she have to learn to make the most important difference to her life?
- Matilda’s environments (home and school) challenge her ability to feel good about herself. How does she rise above this challenge? What does she say to herself?
- What superhuman abilities would you like to have? What more earthly qualities do you have that you can take pride in?
- Can having exceptional qualities ever be a problem? How might that affect your Sense of Self-worth?

- How do Erika’s daydreams affect her Sense of Self-worth?
- What qualities does Erika look for in Alison when she arrives? What assumptions does she make?
- How does the way that Erika thinks about herself change through the film? What events trigger this?
- Have you ever felt the way that Erika did? When? What did you do about it?
- How can changes in our thinking affect both our demeanour and our dreams? A strong Sense of Self-worth can help us weather changes in fortune – has this happened to you?

- What does Wigand think about himself when the film begins? What events cause his self-worth to change?
- How do external pressures on Wigand affect the way he thinks about himself? How does he regard himself as a Professional? Husband? Father? Citizen? Teacher?
- How do conflicting pressures impact on Wigand’s ways of thinking? Have you ever felt torn like that? What did it make you think and feel?
- What lessons did Wigand learn? How would you rate his Sense of Self-worth at the end of the film?
- What qualities of Wigand’s do you admire? Why?

**NB:** Teachers should review suggested films and television programs for suitability before use. Choose and view an excerpt from the feature or episode if time does not permit full viewing.
# Real-life Applications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TITLE</th>
<th>TIME SPAN</th>
<th>GROUP SIZE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>POSSIBLE DISCUSSION POINTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They Look, I Feel</td>
<td>one hour</td>
<td>Small Groups</td>
<td>Students help each other draw a picture of themselves on a long sheet of butchers paper.</td>
<td>- Why do we often (as a society) like to criticise others? How can we counter this? - Why do we often find it easier to be self-critical than to be supportive of ourselves? - How can you counter that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Land of Me</td>
<td>one hour</td>
<td>Small Groups/whole class</td>
<td>Students go home and complete a daily visual diary of their Sense of Self-worth. Along with rating their Sense of Self-worth each day, they should also note any events that might have led to thoughts and feelings that affected their Sense of Self-worth (positive or negative). They should also allow space to write down their self-talk in those situations.</td>
<td>- What is the most valuable activity taught you by the activity? - What strategies do you employ when you are catalysts of the self-talk? - How did you find the general progression of your self-worth over the course of the activity? Did it go up, down, or stay the same? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a Self-Brochure</td>
<td>two hours</td>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>Students create a brochure – like a full-colour travel brochure – that summarises (both visually and in words) their good or negative qualities. It is important that these qualities do not include qualities about their appearance, and more on valuable qualities like values, skills, and unique ways of representing them. Students can do this with scissors and glue, or create the whole brochure on a computer. They should also allow space to write down their self-talk in those situations.</td>
<td>- What did you find interesting about the course? - What were the most difficult parts of the activity? Why? - Why do we often find it easier to be self-critical than to be supportive of ourselves? - How can you counter that?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate Your Self-worth</td>
<td>five hours</td>
<td>Students help each other identify things like: - body image in different cultures.</td>
<td>- What is the most valuable activity taught you by the activity? - What strategies do you employ when you are catalysts of the self-talk? - How did you find the general progression of your self-worth over the course of the activity? Did it go up, down, or stay the same? Why?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: Teachers should feel free to adapt these activities or to create their own ones.
## Classroom Activities Guide

### ACTIVITY NAME

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<tr>
<td>Chicken Ransom</td>
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<td>Junior (&lt;12 y.o.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compose a Poem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Give P.E.A.C.E a Chance</td>
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<td>All Secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heart of the Home</td>
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<td>For Individuals</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am Like …</td>
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<td>⬠</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’m Not Perfect, But …</td>
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<tr>
<td>Let Me Introduce ...</td>
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<td>15+ min.</td>
<td>⬠</td>
<td>⬠</td>
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<tr>
<td>My Adjective</td>
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<td>Uniqueness &amp; Diversity</td>
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<td>Nice New Species</td>
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<td>Values &amp; Qualities</td>
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*Note that items common to classrooms (e.g. wall clock, pens, paper, whiteboard) are assumed to be available.*
Delivering Several Modules Across A Term

If you have decided to deliver more than one SenseAbility module to your students, you may wish to fit those modules into a 10-week term block. There are two recommended models for delivering multiple modules over a term:

Option 1: Delivering three Sense modules (e.g. Sense of Belonging, Sense of Control, and Sense of Future) in three x 45 minute (or longer) sessions with a final review session at the end.

Option 2: Delivering two Sense modules (e.g. Sense of Belonging and Sense of Control) in five x 45 minute (or longer) sessions.

If you believe your students would benefit from learning about and exercising Essential Skills, then you can replace one of the Sense modules with Units from the Essential Skills Module. If you wish to deliver more than three SenseAbility modules, you can simply run two or more 10-session blocks over two or more terms.

Which Modules When?

The relevance of the information and skills explored in this and other Sense modules may change for your students depending on their age and on the challenges they are facing at particular times of the school year.

For instance, during transitional periods like moving from primary to secondary school, Senses of Self-worth, Control, and Belonging are especially important. For students midway through secondary school who are faced with having to choose elective subjects, Senses of Purpose, Control, and Future may seem more keenly relevant to their situation.

You are the best judge of which Senses will be of most benefit to your students, bearing in mind considerations like cultural backgrounds, literacy levels and gender. However, here are some suggestions for ordering or prioritising the Sense modules:

**JUNIOR SECONDARY (≈12–14 years)**
- Self-worth; Belonging; Control; Purpose; Future; Humour

**SENIOR SECONDARY (≈15–18 years)**
- Purpose; Future; Control; Humour; Self-worth; Belonging

The Essential Skills Module can fit in with any module/s, and you should evaluate the need for it regularly.
Activities & Resources
Sense of Self-worth

Why is Having a Sense of Self-worth So Important?
Your Sense of Self-worth is how you regard yourself. It is your understanding of your qualities, your strengths, and your personal attributes. Your Sense of Self-worth is a measure of how you value yourself.

- It recognises that you are valuable because you are you; you are unique, and there is no one else like you in the world.
- It encourages you to try new things, to meet new people, and to really enjoy life.
- It helps you get through tough situations, and to pick yourself up and try again if things don’t work out as you’d hoped.

What it is and What it Isn’t
- A healthy Sense of Self-worth is NOT the same as having an inflated ego!
- It is not about thinking you are great just because you might be good at something, or have an appealing physical attribute.
- You can have healthy Self-worth without having stand-out skills.
- You need to be able to find qualities within yourself that you think are important.
- Things people might value:
  * that you take responsibility for yourself and your actions
  * your ability to be polite to strangers
  * that you always try your best
  * your ability to go to training even on days you mightn’t feel like it
  * the fact that you are unique and there is no one else like you.

Lots of Things Affect Self-worth
- The environments in which you live, study, and socialise.
- How you believe you perform in different activities and settings.
- What other people say to you.
- Perhaps most importantly: what you say to yourself.

Of all the things that affect our Sense of Self-worth, self-talk is the one we have most control over. That means it is very important to get into the habit of replacing unhelpful thoughts like ‘I am an idiot’ or ‘Nobody likes me’ with helpful ones like ‘I have some good qualities’ and ‘There are people who care about me’.

What if I’m Struggling With My Sense of Self-worth?
Someone struggling with their Sense of Self-worth might find it helpful to talk with someone. Friends, family, school counsellor, trusted adults, and medical professionals are good places to start. Some other helpful resources include:

WEBSITES
- www.youthbeyondblue.com
- www.lifeline.org.au
- www.sane.org
- www.reachout.com
- www.headspace.org.au
- www.somazone.com.au
- www.inspire.org.au

HELPLINES
- Youthbeyondblue: 1300 22 4636
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Sane Australia: 1800 18 7263

ONLINE COUNSELLING
- www.kidshelp.com.au
When an event (A) happens, it is our thoughts and interpretations (B) of the event, and not the event itself, that lead us to experience certain emotions and feelings (C), and to act or react in particular ways (D).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTECEDENTS</th>
<th>BELIEFS</th>
<th>CONSEQUENCES</th>
<th>DO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event/Situation</td>
<td>Thoughts</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A**
David asks a girl he likes to a party, but she says she is too busy this week.

**B**
- She must think I’m boring or ugly.
- Well, maybe she is busy. I’ll ask her out another time.

**C**
- DESPONDENT
- PHILOSOPHICAL
- UNHAPPY
- HOPEFUL

**D**
- David stays at home and mopes.
- David goes to the party anyway with a friend.
When an event (A) happens, it is our thoughts and interpretations (B) of the event, and not the event itself, that lead us to experience certain emotions and feelings (C), and to act or react in particular ways (D).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Event/Situation</td>
<td>Thoughts</td>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTION**
Copy/print onto overhead transparency or use as data file for projection during class discussion.
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Was it easy or hard to come up with the positive attributes on the spot? Why/why not?

• In our society, it can be uncommon to hear people describe themselves in positive terms; indeed, doing so can be seen as ‘big noting’. Why might that be? Is that healthy or unhealthy?

• Why is it sometimes easier to find good qualities in other people than it is in ourselves?

• Did you come up with any attributes that surprised you? What were they, and why?

• Were you surprised by qualities that other people attributed to themselves? What were they, and why?

• What were some of the more successful strategies (thinking skills) that people used during the exercise? How could you use these in everyday life?

ACTIVITY: ‘CHICKEN RANSOM’

TIME: 10–15 minutes
SIZE: Groups of six to 10 or whole of class
SPACE: Room to form large circle/s
RESOURCES: Rubber chicken or stuffed toy, pens, paper

The aim is to create a situation where students must think instinctively about themselves in positive ways. The result should be discussion about tools that students can use to speak helpfully to themselves in day-to-day situations.

1. Group/s sit in circle/s. If you have multiple groups, it can be fun to ‘race’ them, so you may need to act as timekeeper.

2. For each group choose a referee who will keep tally with a pen and paper. The referee should list every participant and beneath each name have two columns (one for positive comments, one for negative comments).

3. The rules are simple: the chicken (or toy) will start in one student’s lap. When you say ‘go’ the student must stand, pass the chicken to his/her left, and while the chicken does three full circuits of the circle, state as many positive things about him/herself as possible.

4. When the chicken finishes its third lap, the speaker sits and the person to his/her left becomes the next speaker to list attributes while the chicken does another three laps.

5. Referees keep count of each speaker’s name and their score of positive attributes. They must also challenge false boasts and negative or self-critical comments.

6. The round finishes when everyone in the circle has listed their attributes.

7. Scores can be tallied to decide who or which group generated the most positive comments within each circle.

Chicken Ransom
ACTIVITY: ‘COMPOSE A POEM’

TIME: 5–10 minutes
SIZE: Whole of class
SPACE: No special requirements
RESOURCES: A-B-C-D Model (p.54 or SenseAbility CD)

The aim is to allow students to experience a situation where their thoughts about an event affect their feelings. The result should be that students understand that they can control the way they think about events where they might be tempted to speak critically to themselves – and therefore feel better and take more positive actions.

1. Tell your students that, to set the tone for Sense of Self-worth, everyone is to compose on the spot a poem listing six good qualities about themselves. You (the teacher) say you will randomly pick four people from the class to stand up the front to read their poem.*

2. Explain that everyone has five minutes to compose a poem incorporating their six good qualities. Students are NOT to talk with their classmates in this time.

3. Pretend to be busy with notes/work but try to observe your students’ reactions.

4. After one minute has elapsed, stop your students (no one will be making up any poems; this was an experiment to gauge students’ responses to a specific event, but do not tell the class this yet).

5. Commence class discussion using the tables below.

LIST STUDENTS’ RESPONSES

6. On the board draw up a five-column table. Label the first column ‘A: Event’ and write beneath it the only entry for that column: ‘Asked to recite own poem in front of the class’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASKED TO RECITE OWN POEM IN FRONT OF THE CLASS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Label the third and fourth columns ‘Emotions’ and ‘Bodily Symptoms’ under the broader title ‘C: Feelings’, and ask students: What were you feeling during the activity minute (e.g. anxious, excited, angry, unconcerned)? What was happening to your body (e.g. increased heart rate, sweaty palms, tense muscles)? Write the various answers in columns three and four.

8. Label the fifth column ‘D: Behaviour’ and ask those same students: What were you doing during the minute (e.g. fidgeting, looking around at friends/others, avoiding eye contact with the teacher)? Write responses in column five.

*You can substitute another activity for this, so long as it is likely to evoke a wide range of reactions in your students.
9. Label the second column ‘B: Thoughts’ and ask the same students: What was going through your mind when you were told that you might have to stand up and compose a poem (e.g. ‘This is unfair’, ‘This is exciting!’, ‘I’ll die of embarrassment’, ‘I’m good at poetry’)? Write responses in column two.

**EXAMPLE RESPONSES:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Event</th>
<th>B: Thoughts</th>
<th>C: Feelings</th>
<th>D: Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASKED TO RECITE OWN POEM IN FRONT OF THE CLASS</td>
<td>I’LL MAKE A FOOL OF MYSELF</td>
<td>ANXIETY</td>
<td>LOOK TO FRIENDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DON’T PICK ME!</td>
<td>EMBARRASSED</td>
<td>FIDGET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THIS IS STUPID/UNFAIR</td>
<td>APPREHENSIVE</td>
<td>LOOK DOWN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’M GOOD AT POETRY</td>
<td>CALM</td>
<td>AVOID TEACHER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>GLARE AT TEACHER</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>SWEATY</td>
<td>PROTEST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CHURNING</td>
<td>WORK ON POEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PALE</td>
<td>PREPARATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>KNOTTED STOMACH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FLUSHED</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CLENCHED JAW</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ALERT MUSCLES</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HEART RATE UP</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10. The table now completed, discuss how there were some very different reactions among the class to the *same* event.

11. You can now explain this was an experiment to gauge student’s responses to a specific event.

12. Project the A-B-C-D Model as an OHT or give students a printed copy and explain how people can think differently about the *same event* and consequently have different feelings and actions. In other words, it is not the event but your *interpretation* of the event that leads to emotions and behaviours; you can change your feelings by changing your thinking. Therefore, challenging unhelpful thoughts and generating alternative, helpful ways to think is an important way to help manage stress and curb unhelpful emotional reactions.

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**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- Highlight that a whole raft of different responses – anger, nervousness, excitement – all resulted from the one common event. What caused you all to feel and act in different ways was how you each thought about the event.

- Brainstorm some thoughts that might challenge unhelpful self-talk for this activity (e.g. ‘Maybe I’ll actually come up with something good’ or ‘At least I’m not the only one, we’re all in the same boat’). What feelings might these more helpful thoughts have resulted in?

- Brainstorm some other real-life instances where people might have a variety of reactions to the same event.

- Try to predict the likely feelings and actions that result from various ways of thinking. Which thoughts would be helpful, and which would be unhelpful to the situation? Which thoughts would be most beneficial to the person’s overall goal (e.g. to be happy; to do a good job)?

- Brainstorm a list of events that have the potential for you to feel stressed and to dwell on the serious side of things (e.g. stumbling in public, asking someone for a date, auditioning or sports try-outs). But remember the amount of stress and anxiety you *feel* is linked directly to how you *think* about the event. So, changing the way you think is the most effective way to control your feelings and actions, and to reduce stress and anxiety.

- If any student has composed a poem they’d like to share, now is a good time to do so.
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

NB: Exercise caution if discussing sportspeople or celebrities with over-inflated egos; an unrealistic appraisal of one’s self-worth can be just as damaging as a low Sense of Self-worth.

• What qualities and values were raised? Why are these important, and to whom?

• Why are formal qualifications important for some jobs, but unnecessary for others?

• Even though these jobs don’t require formal qualifications, they still have a qualifying process (e.g. an election, recognition by peers, business success, appreciation by an audience). How important is a strong Sense of Self-worth to these jobs?

• Who are some notable identities in some of these fields? How would you characterise their Sense of Self-worth? Is it enhanced or challenged by their job?

• What strategies might these people employ to strengthen their own Sense of Self-worth?

• What lessons could you learn from these people to apply in your own life to build your Sense of Self-worth?

ACTIVITY: ‘GIVE P.E.A.C.E. A CHANCE’

TIME: 30+ minutes
SIZE: Small groups
SPACE: Room for small groups to work
RESOURCES: Pens and paper

The aim is to encourage thought about individual qualities that are valued by wider society.
The result should be discussion about the qualities valued by individuals and wider society.

1. Discuss that while many jobs require study and formal qualifications (e.g. architects, tradespeople, pilots, doctors), some culturally important jobs do not necessarily need formal qualifications (e.g. politicians, entrepreneurs, activists, creators, and entertainers (hence the activity’s title)).

2. Break the class into small groups, and ask these groups to brainstorm the qualities and values that these job types require. Allow 10 minutes.

3. Have groups then think about how some form of professional qualification, based on these qualities, might be implemented. Allow 10 minutes.

4. Have a representative from each group deliver their findings to the wider class.
Heart of the Home

ACTIVITY: ‘HEART OF THE HOME’

TIME: 10–15 minutes
SIZE: Large groups/whole of class
SPACE: Seating room
RESOURCES: Pens, paper, hat/bucket

The aim is for students to use comparisons with functional objects to encourage thought about unique personal qualities and strengths.

The result should be an enhancement of thinking skills used to help challenge negative self-talk and to promote positive feelings about Sense of Self-worth.

1. Conduct a brief discussion about kitchens. Every home has one – basic or grand – and each is populated with all sorts of utensils. Consider brainstorming a quick list, perhaps under groupings like: Essential (e.g. cutlery, frypan); Useful (e.g. blender, grater); Specialty (e.g. egg-slicer, olive pitter).

2. Students then think about which kitchen utensil they’d see themselves as. Have them write it on a slip of paper without their name. No talking! Allow one minute.

3. Put the slips in a hat or bucket and then have students each pick out a slip to read aloud. The class then guesses who may have written about the utensil in question and why.

4. Students unwilling to admit to authorship do not have to, but those willing to share can give their reasons (e.g. ‘I chose “chopping board” because I am resilient and reliable.’).

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• How easy/hard was it for people to think of themselves in terms of a utensil? Why/why not?

• Was it easy or difficult to attribute utensils to individuals? Why/why not? What does that say about the individual? What does that say about the guesser?

• Every utensil has a purpose and worth, whether it is used daily or rarely. Sometimes our Sense of Self-worth only becomes apparent to us in certain circumstances; brainstorm a list of those situations.

• Was your utensil’s worth in any way similar to the way you see your own worth? Is there another device – not necessarily in the kitchen – that more closely reflects how you value yourself?

• How can you apply the skills used in this activity in your day-to-day life? What skills could you build up to help bolster your Sense of Self-worth more regularly?
I am a Pencil

ACTIVITY: ‘I AM A PENCIL’

TIME: 10–30 minutes
SIZE: Individuals
SPACE: Room to both sit and move around
RESOURCES: Pens and paper

The aim is to think about an object in a helpful, positive way, and then for students to apply that thinking to themselves.

The result should be an appreciation that each of us can discover that we have a number of very good qualities we might not have considered.

1. Bring the class into a quiet, focused mood and have everyone look around the room and silently choose an object (e.g. pencil, clock, chair, air-conditioner, shoe.).

2. Everyone now thinks about that object. Is it unique or common? What is its purpose: utilitarian, artistic, informational? How might it feel to be that object?

3. Everyone now lists three undesirable qualities about that object. For instance, if it is a pencil, undesirable qualities might be that it is common, uninteresting, and easily broken.

4. Ask students to take a moment to assume those negative qualities are their own. Have them take a minute, and quickly write down how possessing those negative qualities might make them feel (e.g. low, unhappy, unmotivated).

5. Now ask everyone to write a counter-list of three or more good qualities about the same object e.g. if it is a pencil, they might write that it is sharp, colourful and reliable.

6. Now ask students to assume these good qualities as their own. Have them take a moment to quickly write down how possessing these good qualities makes them feel (e.g. energised, confident, capable).

7. Quickly go around the class, asking (some or all) students to introduce themselves and their good qualities, e.g. ‘Hi, I’m Jamie, I am a pencil. I am sharp, colourful, and reliable!’.

8. Stop the activity. Commence discussion.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Was it easy or hard to think of some negative qualities for your object?

• Was it easy or hard to think of some good qualities for your object?

• What were some of the feelings that you associated with the negative qualities?

• What were some of the feelings that you associated with the good qualities?

• How easy do you think it might be to think up three good qualities about yourself? (Consider trying this if time permits.) Is it easier or harder to list your good qualities than to be self-critical? Why might that be?

• Discuss the importance of challenging unhelpful self-talk with helpful self-talk (refer back to the helpful/unhelpful thought table on p.7).
ACTIVITY: ‘I AM LIKE …’

TIME: 20–40 minutes
SIZE: Individuals
SPACE: For individuals to work
RESOURCES: Aluminium foil

The aim is for participants to express things they value through sculpture.

The result should be an appreciation that everyone has the ability to find value in their world, regardless of their skill-set and possessions.

1. Briefly brainstorm things that students find valuable in their day-to-day life. These should not include things like possessions (iPods, trophies, etc.), but concentrate on experiences (enjoying the breeze on their face, making a friend laugh, feeling the water in the swimming pool, etc.).

2. Distribute a length of aluminium foil to each student.

3. Students are to express in aluminium foil sculpture – realistic or abstract – something (feeling or experience) that they find valuable in the world (again, not a possession).

4. Allow as much time as you see fit.

5. When sculptures are done, ask whether anyone wishes to share their sculpture and its rationale to the wider class.

NB: an alternative approach for younger students is to contemplate what animal they consider themselves to be like, and why (e.g. ‘I am like a horse: useful and wilful’). They then create their animal out of aluminium foil.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• How easy or hard was it to think about things that add value to your life? Why/Why not?

• Do you think your enjoyment of those things helps you to define yourself? In what way?

• Have you always felt that way? Do you think these things change over time? What does that say about your Sense of Self-worth? Does it change over time, too? What might be some causes of those changes?

• Was it easy or hard to express your idea using aluminium foil? Why/Why not? Was it easier or more difficult than expressing it verbally? Do you think it would be easier now to bring that idea to mind in the form of self-talk?

• What skills do you think you learned or exercised in this activity that you could apply to everyday life? During what circumstances might these skills be especially valuable?
I’m Not Perfect, But …

**ACTIVITY: ‘I’M NOT PERFECT, BUT …’**

**TIME:** 10+ minutes  
**SIZE:** Individuals  
**SPACE:** For individuals to write  
**RESOURCES:** Pen, paper, hat/bucket (optional)

NB: If students are struggling to find good qualities about themselves, you may need to remind them that their uniqueness is itself a truly valuable quality.

**The aim** is for students to carefully consider their positive qualities and characteristics.  
**The result** should be an improved ability for students to access those positive, affirming thoughts about themselves in their day-to-day lives.

1. Have students imagine a world where no one wants for anything material – what people crave and value highly is genuine human interaction and positive relationships.

2. Students are to write eBay-style advertisements – but the products they are putting up for bid are themselves as friends. They each have just 40 words to think about the qualities that they possess that would make them an excellent friend for the successful highest bidder.

3. Stress that these advertisements must be truthful.

4. Students draft their advertisements. Allow no more than 10 minutes for the creative process.

5. Consider having students write their ads on small slips of paper and put them into a hat/bucket. The slips can be drawn and read aloud one-by-one – students need only admit to authorship if they are comfortable doing so.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- This activity was a fiction, and true friendships cannot be bought or sold. But in real life, friendship does have rewards and costs – what are some?

- In what ways do good friendships strengthen one’s Sense of Self-worth?

- In what ways could relationships with critical people undermine a Sense of Self-worth?

- What qualities do you admire in your friends?

- Did you find it easy or hard to think about the qualities that make you a good friend? Why/why not?

- Did thinking about your qualities make you feel better about yourself? If so, how can you use what you’ve learned in this activity in your day-to-day life?
Let Me Introduce …

**ACTIVITY: ‘LET ME INTRODUCE …’**

**TIME:** 15 minutes  
**SIZE:** Groups of four  
**SPACE:** For small groups to mingle  
**RESOURCES:** Nil

The aim is to encourage students to verbalise positive qualities about themselves in front of their peers. The result should be an understanding that it is okay – indeed, it’s very important – to think of themselves in positive terms in order to build and maintain a strong Sense of Self-worth.

1. Break the class into groups of four (preferably groups where students aren’t best friends). If numbers don’t divide by four, try to get remainders into a pair.

2. Have each group of four divide into two pairs.

3. In the next four minutes (two minutes for each partner), both partners in each pair are to gently question the other in order to learn new things about them (e.g. interests, places they’ve travelled to, things they’ve done for others, things they are good at, pets they own, family history, places they want to go to).

4. After four minutes is up, have the pairs return to their group of four. Explain that you want groups to pretend they are at a dinner party for impressive dignitaries. Everyone is going to introduce their partner to the other pair of ‘strangers’ in their quartet. The introductions are to concentrate on the positive qualities that students have learned about their partner. While he/she is being introduced, students must remain silent, but the pair of ‘strangers’ to whom they are being introduced is allowed to ask questions of the partner.

5. After every student in each group has been introduced, stop the activity and commence class discussion.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- What thoughts went through your mind when your partner was quizzing you about your life? Did those thoughts make you feel special? Self-conscious? Embarrassed? Excited? Why?

- What thoughts went through your mind when your partner was introducing you to the other pair in your quartet? Were these thoughts and feelings different? Why/why not?

- Was it easier to ask questions of your partner than to answer them yourself? Why might that be? Have you ever asked yourself those questions? Why/why not?

- What things about yourself surprised your partner? What things about yourself surprised you? What thoughts and feelings resulted?

- What thoughts and feelings about this activity did you experience when it was introduced? What do you think and feel about the results now it’s over?

- What skills do you think you’ve learned through the activity that you can apply in your day-to-day life? In what circumstances might they prove most valuable.
ACTIVITY: ‘MY ADJECTIVE’

TIME: 10–15 minutes
SIZE: Large groups or whole of class
SPACE: Room to form large circle/s
RESOURCES: Tennis ball

The aim is to create a situation where students must think instinctively about themselves in positive ways.

The result should be discussion about the tools that can help students speak helpfully to themselves in day-to-day situations.

1. Have students form a large circle.

2. Everyone is to come up with adjectives for themselves that begin with the same first letter of their first name. The important thing is that the adjectives be both positive and true.

3. Whenever the tennis ball is thrown to them, the student must introduce him/herself with their adjective and name, e.g. ‘Hi, I’m Jolly John’. John must then throw the ball to another person who must reiterate the thrower’s name and introduce him/herself e.g. ‘Hi Jolly John, I’m Reliable Renee’. Renee then throws the ball to Charlie who says, ‘Hi Reliable Renee, I’m Cheerful Charlie’, etc.

4. Commence the activity by throwing the tennis ball to someone.

5. NB: if the adjective is known to be untrue or is unduly negative (e.g. Ugly Ursula) then you and the group can shout, ‘No!’ and demand the student try again until they come up with a positive adjective. Multiple words (e.g. Fun-to-be-with Fred) are admissible at your discretion.

6. Keep the activity going until everyone has had at least one, and preferably two, attempts at coming up with positive adjectives that describe themselves.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Who had the best/most appropriate/funniest adjective?

• Was it easy or hard to come up with the adjectives on the spot? Why/why not? Did you feel comfortable coming up with your adjective? If not, why not?

• Why in our society is it often awkward to speak well of ourselves? Is that healthy or unhealthy?

• Why is it sometimes easier to find good qualities in other people than it is in ourselves?

• What strategies (thinking skills) did people use during the exercise? How could you use those in everyday life?

Consider repeating the activity, but instead of students coming up with adjectives for themselves, the person who catches the ball must come up with a positive adjective for the person who threw it to them. Discuss what students thought and felt when they were well described by their peers, and how they might turn those helpful comments into helpful self-talk.
**ACTIVITY: ‘MY CARNEVALE’**

**TIME:** 30+ minutes  
**SIZE:** Individuals  
**SPACE:** For individuals to work  
**RESOURCES:** Mask Templates 1 & 2 (pp.67–68), magazines, glue, pens, paint

The aim is to encourage students to think about the way they define themselves in their minds.  
The result should be an appreciation that everyone has some control over the way they think about themselves, and thus has some control over their own Sense of Self-worth.

1. Conduct a brief discussion about masks and the roles they play and have played in many cultures (Japanese, Polynesian, ancient Greek, etc.). The Venetian celebration Carnevale goes back nearly 800 years, and the Venetian mascherari, or mask-makers, are highly admired.

2. Students are going to decorate their own masks, both inside and outside, to represent themselves. They should think carefully about how they want to portray themselves to themselves (inside) and to others (outside), and whether, indeed, there should be a difference between the two.

3. Students can use magazine pictures, words, drawings or handwriting to decorate their masks. They may want to paint them or adorn them with quotations or poems.

4. It might be beneficial to allow a loose class discussion to evolve while students are decorating their masks.

5. Allow as much time as you see fit. Allow students comfortable doing so to share their creations with the rest of the class.

**DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS**

- What were your thoughts when you were told about the exercise? How did those thoughts make you feel about presenting aspects of yourself visually? Why do you think you felt that way?

- Did you think about yourself as you are now, or yourself as you’d like to be? What is the difference?

- What were the differences between the inside and the outside of your mask? How does this correlate with the face you ‘wear’ every day?

- What factors determine the facets of ourselves we feel comfortable exhibiting to the outside world? Is it healthy or unhealthy to put stock in those?
NOTE
While ready-made papier-mache masks can be purchased from craft stores, this template will allow you to make masks very cheaply.

OTHER MATERIALS
White card as backing board, A4 size (200 gsm), glue, scissors, and string/elastic for tying onto the head.

ACTION
Copy/Print out the template, one per student. Glue the template to the card and cut it out.
NOTE
While ready-made papier-mache masks can be purchased from craft stores, this template will allow you to make masks very cheaply.

OTHER MATERIALS
White card as backing board, A4 size (200 gsm), glue, scissors, and string/elastic for tying onto the head or wire/stick

ACTION
Copy/Print out the template, one per student. Glue the template to the card and cut it out.

NOTE
Rather than using string to tie the mask to the head, wire or a stick can be carefully cut to length and taped to the inside of the mask. This is better done prior to decorating.
ACTIVITY: ‘MY LOGO’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Individuals
SPACE: For individuals to work
RESOURCES: Paper, pens, or computer

The aim is for students to consider positive aspects of themselves and then express these graphically.
The result should be an appreciation that self-worth can be bolstered through conscious effort.

1. Briefly discuss well-known corporate logos and what they convey/signify (e.g. Apple, Rolls Royce, Qantas). Why are logos important to companies? How do positive aspects of a company become associated with a logo? What considerations do designers take into account (e.g. look at Michael Bryce’s design for the 2000 Olympics)?

2. Each student is to design his/her own logo. The logos should encapsulate qualities that they like about themselves. They perhaps need to list these qualities before deciding on things like form, colour, etc.

3. Ask students who are comfortable doing so to present their finished logos to the class along with their design rationale. Consider showing some of the logos to the class and having students try to guess their creator.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• If a stranger found your logo on a billboard, what are three things you’d like that person to interpret it to mean about you?

• What did you think about when you started thinking about your logo?

• Why are we sometimes better at isolating the negatives in ourselves rather than the positives? What steps can we take to overcome that mindset?

• What surprises did you come up with about yourself?

• How hard was it to make the final decision about the form of the logo? Why/why not?

• Do logos remain fixed? Why do some remain unchanged for decades (e.g. BMW) and others change/evolve regularly (Qantas)? When or why would your logo change? What would those changes say about you?
ACTIVITY: ‘NICE NEW SPECIES’

TIME: 10–15 minutes
SIZE: Whole of class
SPACE: No special requirements
RESOURCES: Animals OHT 1 & 2 (pp.71–72), pens, paper

The aim is for students to think about how they regard themselves.
The result should be an appreciation that our values and qualities contribute strongly to our Sense of Self-worth.

1. Project the picture of the four animals heading the columns (panther, dog, dolphin, python).

2. Ask students to consider what qualities they might share with those animals, then have them rate all four, from which they are most like, to which they are least like.

3. Brainstorm as a class the qualities that typify each creature, listing the qualities under each animal on the OHT.

4. Students are to imagine they can engage the services of a genetic scientist who is able to fuse any two members of the four species together. Given this development, which hybrid creature would students now think they are like? (Panth-og? Pyth-phin?). Have them write down their answer and reasons.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Allow brief discussion about the choices students made about their hybrid creatures, and why they chose them.

• Was it easy or hard to decide, initially, which animal you were most like? Why/why not?

• Why is it sometimes simpler to find qualities in something – or someone – else than it is to find qualities within ourselves? Is it habit? Do we feel pressured?

• What thinking tools can we use to rectify this and make it easier to bring our good qualities more easily to mind?

• How is real life similar to the situation of engaging a not-so-mad scientist? How does a change in events and circumstances allow (or force) us to reconsider the way we regard ourselves? What are some good strategies for maintaining a strong Sense of Self-worth in the face of change?
ACTION
Copy/print onto overhead transparency film.
ACTION

Copy/print onto overhead transparency film. Cut out roughly each silhouette and then dissect each along the dotted line for projection when discussing participants' “Nice New Species” creations.
ACTIVITY: ‘NOISE IN THE NIGHT’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Whole of class
SPACE: No special requirements
RESOURCES: Whiteboard

The aim is to revisit the A-B-C-D Model in a different way. NB: An alternative is to select Helpful Thinking & Self-talk, Unit 1, from the Essential Skills Module, where this activity is supported by a DVD clip.

The result should be a firmer understanding that while we cannot control all events, we can control the way we think about them, and consequently how we feel about them and what we do as a result.

1. Draw up a blank table including the column headings (see example below).
2. Explain the scenario: you are home alone in bed. It is dark and quiet. Suddenly, you hear a loud, unexpected noise.
3. Under ‘Event’ write in ‘Strange noise in the night.’
4. Ask questions in the following order, writing responses in the table:
   I. How do you feel?
   II. What are your physical symptoms?
   III. What do you do?
   IV. Why did you do that (i.e. what were you thinking)?

EXAMPLE RESPONSES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVENT</th>
<th>THOUGHTS</th>
<th>FEELINGS</th>
<th>SYMPTOMS</th>
<th>DO?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STRANGE NOISE IN THE NIGHT</td>
<td>I HATE BEING ALONE</td>
<td>ANNOYED</td>
<td>CLAMMY</td>
<td>LOOK FOR MOBILE PHONE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>THIS IS DANGEROUS</td>
<td>SCARED</td>
<td>HEART POUNDING</td>
<td>PULL BLANKETS OVER YOUR HEAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IN ALL ALONE!</td>
<td>APPREHENSIVE</td>
<td>PALE</td>
<td>LISTEN INTENTLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SURELY IT’S NOTHING</td>
<td>SILLY</td>
<td>FLUSHING</td>
<td>TELL YOURSELF NOT TO BE SILLY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IT MIGHT BE A BURGLAR</td>
<td>CURIOUS, ANGRY</td>
<td>ALERT</td>
<td>GRAB CRICKET BAT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB: This represents an ideal example where responses about feelings and actions are lined up to be consistent with relevant thoughts (e.g. apprehensive and pale, and listening intently, are results of the thought, I’m all alone!). Since your students will generate responses in a more haphazard fashion, you may not be able to ‘line up’ associated thoughts, feelings, and actions so neatly. Don’t be concerned; what is important is that students understand, and you emphasise, the thoughts–feelings–actions link.

Draw up a second blank table with the same headings.

5. Explain that NOW you hear the same noise, but this time you know it is the neighbour’s dog that often comes out this time each night to rummage in the garbage bin.
6. Ask the same questions in the same order, writing sample responses in the columns, e.g. Feel? Annoyed. Symptoms? Slight flush. What do you do? Fume about the neighbour. Why did you do that (i.e. what were you thinking)? For example ‘I’m sick of that dog and I must talk to my neighbour about it.’
7. Highlight that a whole raft of different responses – nervousness, anger, excitement, etc. – all resulted from the one common event. Emphasise again the thoughts–feelings–actions link.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Take on the thought ‘There’s a burglar in my house!’ and consider how that thought makes you feel; now challenge that thought, changing it to ‘I’m sure it’s just that rotten dog.’ Does this second thought result in different feelings?
• Brainstorm some other real-life instances where people might have a variety of reactions to the same event.
• Brainstorm a list of events that have the potential to cause stress and anxiety (e.g. sudden illness, exams, asking someone for a date, auditions or sports tryouts). But remember the amount of stress and anxiety you feel is linked directly to how you think about the event. So changing the way you think is the most effective way to control your feelings and actions, and thus reduce stress and anxiety. If time permits, brainstorm some potentially helpful self-talk for some of these generated events.
Our Special Guest

ACTIVITY: ‘OUR SPECIAL GUEST’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Large groups/whole of class
SPACE: To arrange desks like a quiz show
RESOURCES: Scenarios (p.75), pens and paper

The aim is for students to challenge unhelpful thoughts during a scenario.
The result should be that students learn thinking skills to help them challenge unhelpful thoughts and self-talk in their day-to-day lives.

1. This activity takes the form of a talk show, where six panellists pass comment on three different people with fictional scenarios below. The audience should be participatory.

2. Divide students into these groups:
   • three ‘unhelpful’ panellists
   • three ‘helpful’ panellists
   • three scenario individuals
   • one compere
   • remaining students are audience members.

3. Have the first scenario individual read out or paraphrase their situation (you can use the scenarios provided, or make up your own).

4. The ‘unhelpful’ panellists provide ‘unhelpful’ ways to think about the scenario – ways of thinking that are sure to undermine the individual in question’s Sense of Self-worth.

5. The ‘helpful’ panellists must then counter these unhelpful thoughts with helpful ways of thinking or self-talking about the scenario.

6. Applause from the audience determines the most successful way to think about the scenario.

7. Consider changing the panellists with each new scenario to ensure a large number of students get to practise their thinking skills.
DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Which was easier: coming up with helpful or unhelpful ways to think about the scenarios? Why might that be?

• What were some of the standout helpful suggestions?

• Who has ever been in a situation like one of the scenario individuals? What were you thinking at the time? What did you do? After today, might you do things differently?

• In what ways were the panellists like your own brain? Why do we seem to have the ability to think about things in both unhelpful and helpful ways? What strategies could you use to tip the balance in favour of your brain's ‘helpful’ panellists?

• Shows with panellists that give positive feedback are now rating better than shows with super-critical panellists. What habits can you get into to ensure you give yourself more positive and less critical feedback?
Repeating Game

ACTIVITY: ‘REPEATING GAME’

TIME: 15+ minutes
SIZE: Pairs in front of class/large groups
SPACE: For pairs to sit and others to observe
RESOURCES: Nil

NB: This activity can work with the whole class watching one pair at work or, if you are confident in your students, it can work with multiple sets of pairs being observed by smaller groups. Encourage pairings where the students don’t know each other well.

The aim is for students to think about unique qualities in another person.

The result should be an appreciation that each of us is unique and has his or her own interests and value systems.

1. Break the class into pairs, or bring a demonstration pair to the front of the class.

2. Pair/s sit opposite one another in a calm, respectful mood.

3. One student starts: he/she will offer an observation about the other to do with qualities they think the other is likely to have. For instance: ‘You look like you’d be polite to strangers.’

4. The opposite student should now either agree or disagree, e.g. ‘I am polite to strangers, and you look like you think deeply about things’.

5. Guidance may be needed to ensure the observations don’t become critical or dissolve into laughter.

6. The first student then agrees or disagrees and responds with a second observation, e.g. ‘I don’t really think too deeply about things, and you look like you enjoy being outdoors’.

7. The round continues until you decide fruitful observations have been made, or when students run out of steam.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• What does this activity suggest about the old saying, ‘You can’t judge a book by its cover’?

• For those who were in pairs, how hard was it to guess qualities about your partner? Did it get harder or easier as the round progressed? Why might that be?

• For those who were in pairs, how did it feel to have somebody making observations about your qualities?

• How did it feel to repeat aloud your partner’s observations about you? Did that affect your Sense of Self-worth? How?

• Was it uncomfortable to repeat aloud observations made about you? Why/why not?

• Observers: What did you notice about the activity? In what way was the activity like real/everyday life?

• If you were to do the activity in the mirror, what would you say?
ACTIVITY: ‘SHEETS TO THE WIND!’

TIME: 20+ minutes
SIZE: Groups of any size
SPACE: For group/s to form seated circle/s
RESOURCES: One roll of toilet paper per group

The aim is for students to bring to mind and verbalise positive qualities they think they possess. The result should be an understanding that it is important to your Sense of Self-worth that you think and speak helpfully about yourself.

1. Have groups sit in圈/s.

2. Hand a roll of toilet paper to each group. Every member of the group is to take as many pieces of toilet paper from the roll as they wish. Do not answer questions from students asking for clues about how many they should take! As a result, some may take one sheet, some may take 12 (make sure you set a limit!).

3. Explain that every student must stand up and, for every sheet of toilet paper they have, they must tell the rest of the group an interesting fact about themselves (and must say something positive!). Do not let students fob their stacks of toilet paper onto others!

4. After each interesting fact, the speaker can throw a sheet of toilet paper into the centre until all are gone.

5. Consider that students who have taken multiple sheets may not have to tell all their ‘interesting facts’ at once. You may allow students to alternate and thus allow more thinking time.

6. The activity finishes when all sheets of toilet paper are on the floor.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- What went through your mind when you learned what you had to do regarding your toilet paper sheets? How did you feel? Why do you think you thought and felt that way? If you thought in a negative or critical way, how might you have changed that thinking to alter the way you felt?

- Was it easy or hard to think of interesting things about yourself? What were you thinking as you were speaking? What did you think others were thinking about you? What does this say about how you regard aspects of yourself?

- For those who chose multiple sheets: Did it become easier or harder to think of new things about yourself as the activity progressed? Why was that?

- What do you think now the activity is over? Do you feel differently to how you did at the start? Why might that be?

- What do you think other people might think about you now they know new things about you? Do those thoughts alter who you are?

- What skills have you learned in this activity that you might be able to take out into everyday life?
Who Am I?

ACTIVITY: ‘WHO AM I?’

TIME: 20+ minutes
SIZE: Large groups/whole of class
SPACE: Clear room to mingle in
RESOURCES: Famous Identity Cards 1, 2, & 3 (pp.79–81 or SenseAbility CD); safety pins/sticky tape; hat/bucket

The aim is for students to think about their good qualities. The result should be an appreciation that thinking positively about yourself is a valuable behaviour that can be learned and/or strengthened.

1. Place the separated Famous Identity Cards in a hat or bucket.

2. Stick or pin one card on each student in a place where the student cannot see the name on the card they wear (e.g. pinned between the shoulder blades, stuck to their forehead).

3. Students must try to work out the name on their card by questioning other students. However, there are rules to the questions and answers. Students can only answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to any question except one: ‘How am I like [student’s own name]?’ In other words, Jessica Smith, wearing the name card Michelangelo, can ask the question: ‘How am I like Jessica Smith?’ to which her fellow students might answer: ‘You are both artistic.’

4. Allow 5 to 10 minutes for students to mingle and question one another. If students guess the name on the card they wear, tell them to keep the answer to themselves for the moment.

5. When the time is up, have students form a large circle and one-by-one offer their best guess about the name on the card they are wearing. If they guess correctly, applaud!

6. If time permits, allow each person to look at their card and then come up with three ways in which they themselves think they are like the person on their card.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

• Were you surprised to learn the name on your card? Why?

• How difficult or easy was it to think of yourself in terms of someone famous? Why was that?

• Was it easier or harder to answer questions from other students than to work out your own identity? Why is it often easier to see qualities in other people than it is to see them in ourselves?

• What answers from other students surprised you? Why was that? How did those answers affect your Sense of Self-worth?

• Did you learn anything new about yourself – or about the way that others regard you – from the activity? What did that new knowledge make you think and feel?

• What are some strategies for bringing these positive thinking skills you used today into your day-to-day life? What are some circumstances in which thinking positively about yourself might be a real benefit?
ACTION

Copy/print these cards and separate along the dotted lines using scissors or guillotine. Place cards (one each) on students’ back or forehead ensuring the wearer cannot read the card.

Ludwig Van Beethoven | Queen Elizabeth II

Albert Einstein | Angelina Jolie

Nelson Mandela | Henry Ford

Cleopatra | Confucius

Galileo | Marie Curie
ACTION

Copy/print these cards and separate along the dotted lines using scissors or guillotine. Place cards (one each) on students’ back or forehead ensuring the wearer cannot read the card.

Florence Nightingale

Michelangelo

Thomas Edison

Joan of Arc

Justin Timberlake

Napoleon Bonaparte

Cpt. James Cook

Christina Aguilera

Lady Gaga

Amelia Earhart
ACTION

Copy/print these cards and separate along the dotted lines using scissors or guillotine. Place cards (one each) on students’ back or forehead ensuring the wearer cannot read the card.

Howard Florey   Julia Gillard

J K Rowling   Stephanie Rice

Donald Bradman   Quentin Bryce

Robert Downey Jr.   Charles Kingsford Smith

The US President   Steve Jobs
Research References
The SenseAbility Suite takes a positive skill-building approach which aims to enhance or encourage good mental health, emotional wellbeing, and resilience in young people. The program is grounded in evidence-based cognitive-behavioural principles that regard thoughts as central in influencing our feelings and consequent behaviour. Assisting young people to develop skills in monitoring and challenging unhelpful thoughts is, therefore, a core component of the program. In addition, the series draws on the positive psychology literature and takes a strength-based approach that removes the focus from ‘defects’ and ‘deficits’ and focuses instead on the inherent qualities and skills that can be capitalised on. To read more about the research evidence for the importance of cognitive elements and positive psychology in mental health and emotional wellbeing, see the references listed below.

SenseAbility is also supported by a range of literature and research that attests to the role of the six Senses – Self-worth, Control, Belonging, Purpose, Future and Humour – as fundamental to building emotional wellbeing and resilience. Supporting young people to build or enhance these senses may be more important now than ever before. As Eckersley recently wrote, ‘while young people are materially better off . . . social and cultural changes have made it harder for them to develop a strong sense of identity, purpose, belonging and security: in short, to feel life is deeply meaningful and worthwhile’ (Eckersley, 2008, p.5).

Like the other senses, Sense of Self-worth plays an important role in good mental health and wellbeing. A strong Sense of Self-worth has been associated with better academic performance (Humphrey, Charlton, & Newton, 2004), reduced anxiety (Grills & Ollendick, 2002), and the use of more positive coping strategies (Mantzicopoulos, 1990). A small sample of research articles supporting the importance of Sense of Self-worth is listed below. For those who would like to read more on the evidence supporting the other senses, please see the individual Sense modules.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literature and research on cognitive-behavioural principles</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A negative cognitive triad (negative view of the self, the world, and the future) is proposed to explain the development of depression and other mental health problems. Distorted or dysfunctional thinking is common to all psychological disturbance.</td>
<td>Beck, 1964, 1976, 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents with negative cognitions about themselves, their world, or the future were more vulnerable to depression.</td>
<td>Jaycox, Reivich, Gilhalm, &amp; Seligman, 1994</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Literature and research on positive psychology</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A collection of individual papers that cover many broad areas on topics such as identifying strengths and subjective wellbeing.</td>
<td>Snyder &amp; Lopez, 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An introduction to the area of positive psychology. An evaluation of interventions in positive psychology.</td>
<td>Seligman et al., 2000, 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
<th>Literature and research on Sense of Self-worth</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A strong sense of self-worth was found to act as a protective factor against bullying in young adolescents who were overweight.</td>
<td>Fox &amp; Farrow, 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For middle school boys who were victims of bullying, self-worth acted as a protective factor with higher self-worth associated with fewer anxiety symptoms.</td>
<td>Grills &amp; Ollendick, 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive self-worth was found to be a protective factor against higher levels of stress (as measured by levels of epinephrine) in children while undergoing cancer treatment.</td>
<td>Hockenberry-Eaton, Kemp, &amp; Diolorio, 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a study of Year 7 students, self-worth was positively associated with academic achievement. Higher self-worth was related to reports of greater teacher and parent support.</td>
<td>Humphrey et al., 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High self-worth has been associated with a successful transition to high school.</td>
<td>Lord, Eccles, &amp; McCarthy, 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high sense of self-worth in elementary school students was associated with the use of positive-action-oriented coping strategies in the face of a stressful school experience.</td>
<td>Mantzicopoulos, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a longitudinal study of students from Grade 6 to 7, low self-worth created vulnerability to depressive symptoms and conduct problems.</td>
<td>McCarty, Vander Stoep, &amp; McCauley, 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A high sense of self-worth was associated with decreased vulnerability to life stress in urban youth.</td>
<td>Weist, Freedman, Paskewitz, Proescher, &amp; Flaherty, 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent girls with higher self-worth were less likely to be involved in risk behaviours related to substance use, bullying, suicidality, and sexuality.</td>
<td>Wild, Fisher, Bhan, &amp; Lombard, 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High self-worth in African American adolescents was associated with stronger feelings of bonding to school. Bonding to school was associated with higher academic performance.</td>
<td>Zand &amp; Thompson, 2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Suggested reading</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘The positive educational practices framework: A tool for facilitating the work of educational psychologists in promoting pupil wellbeing.’</td>
<td>Noble &amp; McGrath, 2008</td>
</tr>
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</table>


