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Learning Material



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TOR VERGATA
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI ROMA



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PROJECT INFORMATION

NUMBER: 2024-1-PL01-KA220-YOU-000253958

ACRONYM: STRONGERYOU(th)

TITLE: STRONGERYOU(th): PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMME THAT WILL ENHANCE YOUTH WORKERS KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SELF CARE, FOSTER YOUTH RESILIENCE AND PROMOTE WELLBEING

ACTION TYPE: KA220-YOU - Cooperation partnerships in youth (KA220-YOU)

WEBSITE: <https://strongeryouthproject.eu/>

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STRONGER YOU(TH)

PROMOTING SELF-ACCEPTANCE AND SELF-ESTEEM

Partner Organisation Name	CET Platform Lietuva
Country	Lithuania

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MODULE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OBJECTIVES

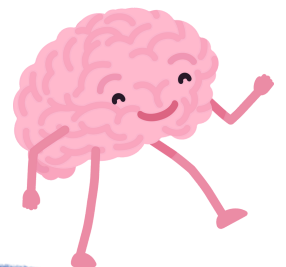
Promoting Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem

This module helps young people understand self-acceptance and self-esteem, and how these shape mental wellbeing. It explores the impact of self-talk, identity, body image, and social pressures, while offering tools to replace harmful patterns with healthier, more compassionate practices. Building self-esteem matters because how youth see and value themselves strongly affects resilience, confidence, and emotional health.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, learners will:

- Understand what self-acceptance and self-esteem mean and why they are important.
- Recognize factors that influence self-worth, such as culture, exposure to social media, and early experiences.
- Identify the impact of negative self-talk on mental health.
- Learn practical strategies to build self-esteem, compassion and foster a healthier self-image.





MODULE TOPICS & STRUCTURE

1. Understanding Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem

- a. Theory: Definitions, differences, and role in mental health.
- b. Practice: Reflection exercise: "How do I define myself?"

2. The Inner Critic and Self-Compassion

- a. Theory: How thoughts shape emotions and self-worth.
- b. Practice: Reframing negative self-talk.

3. Identity, Body Image, and Social Comparison

- a. Theory: Influence of culture, peers, and social media on self-image.
- b. Practice: Group discussion/ journaling: "When do I compare myself and how does it affect me?"

4. Tools to Build Self-Esteem

- a. Theory: Principles of self-compassion and gratitude.
- b. Practice: Guided self-compassion or mindfulness exercise.

5. Integrating Self-Acceptance into Daily Life

- a. Theory: The importance of routines, boundaries, and supportive environments.
- b. Practice: Create a personal "self-esteem action plan" with small, achievable goals.





LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge & Understanding

Learners will be able to:

- Define self-acceptance and self-esteem.
- Explain their significance for mental health.
- Identify factors that shape self-worth, including self-talk, identity, body image, and social comparison.
- Describe the impact of negative self-beliefs on emotional wellbeing.
- Recognize practical approaches for strengthening self-esteem and self-acceptance.

Skills

Learners will be able to:

- Identify self-critical thoughts and reframe them using positive self-talk.
- Apply mindfulness and self-compassion techniques to daily situations.
- Practice strategies that reduce negative social comparison.
- Create a personal action plan for building self-esteem and resilience.
- Set achievable, meaningful goals to support ongoing self-acceptance.





TOPIC SECTIONS

SECTION 1: Understanding Self-Acceptance and Self-Esteem

1. Theoretical Concept

Short Description: Explore what self-acceptance and self-esteem mean, how they differ, and their role in mental health.

Key Theoretical Input: Self-acceptance is unconditional love for oneself, while self-esteem is the value of oneself based on perceived worth. Both are essential for resilience and well-being.

Multimedia Links: [VIDEOS: *The Journey to Self-Love: Which Stage Are You At?* | *What Self-Esteem Is* | *On Disliking Oneself*](#)

[Books: *Kristen Neff - Self compassion: the proven power of being kind to yourself*](#)

2. Practical Activity Structure

Name of Activity: Defining Myself

Goals: Increase self-awareness of personal definitions of worth

Materials Needed: Paper, pens/journals.

Duration: 10-15 minutes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

- Ask learners to write "Who am I?" at the top of a page.
- For 5 minutes, list as many self-definitions as possible (e.g., roles, qualities, values).
- Highlight which items are external (e.g., achievements) vs. internal (e.g., kindness, perseverance).

Reflection / Follow-up:

Discuss how shifting focus from external to internal qualities can support healthier self-worth.



TOPIC SECTIONS

SECTION 2: The Inner Critic and Self-Compassion

1. Theoretical Concept

Short Description: Explore the role of inner dialogue and how self-talk shapes emotions.

Key Theoretical Input: Negative self-talk fuels shame and low self-esteem; self-compassion helps counter the inner critic.

Multimedia Links: **VIDEOS:** [What to do if your inner voice is cruel Ethan Kross](#) | [How to challenge your negative self-talk Josh Green](#) |

2. Practical Activity Structure

Name of Activity: Reframing My Inner Voice

Goals: Build awareness of inner critic and practice turning self-criticism into supportive self-talk.

Materials Needed: Paper, pens/journals.

Duration: 15–20 minutes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

- *Write down three recent self-critical thoughts.*
- *For each, rewrite it as if speaking kindly to a close friend.*
- *Share (voluntarily) examples with the group.*
- *Alternatively - the self-critical thoughts can be preselected by participants and shared anonymously, so each of them gets the set of thoughts that are random.*

Reflection / Follow-up: ...

Ask: How does the supportive version feel different? What might change if you practiced this daily?



TOPIC SECTIONS

SECTION 3: Identity, Body Image, and Social Comparison

1. Theoretical Concept

Short Description: Explore how culture, peers, and social media shape self-image and comparisons.

Key Theoretical Input: Social comparison can motivate or harm; media often reinforces unrealistic ideals that lower self-esteem.

Multimedia Links: **VIDEOS:** [*Social Media And Self-Image*](#) | [*Does social media negatively impact teen mental health?*](#) |

[*Articles: The impacts of social media on youth self-image By Molly Smith*](#) | [*Focus on Self-Presentation on Social Media across Sociodemographic Variables, Lifestyles, and Personalities: A Cross-Sectional Study*](#)

2. Practical Activity Structure

Name of Activity: The Comparison Lens

Goals: Build awareness of comparison patterns and their emotional impact.

Materials Needed: Paper, pens/journals.

Duration: 15–20 minutes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

- *Ask learners to reflect on a time they compared themselves to others.*
- *Write down: What triggered it? How did it make me feel? Was it helpful or harmful?*
- *Share insights in pairs or small groups.*

Reflection / Follow-up:

Encourage reframing comparisons by focussing on your own growth rather than external evaluation.



TOPIC SECTIONS

SECTION 4: Tools to Build Self-Esteem

1. Theoretical Concept

Short Description: Introduce practical strategies that nurture self-worth.

Key Theoretical Input: Self-compassion, gratitude, and strength-based reflection improve resilience and confidence.

Multimedia Links: ***VIDEOS:** [Guided Meditation: The RAIN of Self-Compassion with Tara Brach](#) | [5 Exercises To Strengthen Your Self-Confidence](#)*

***Materials:** [Self-Esteem Worksheets](#) |*

2. Practical Activity Structure

Name of Activity: Strengths & Gratitude Practice

Goals: Strengthen positive self-focus and appreciation.

Materials Needed: Paper, pens/journals.

Duration: 15–20 minutes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

- *List three personal strengths or achievements (big or small).*
- *List three things you are grateful for today.*
- *Share one item in pairs or group (optional).*

Reflection / Follow-up: ...

Discuss how gratitude and focusing on strengths shift self-perception over time.



TOPIC SECTIONS

SECTION 4: Integrating Self-Acceptance into Daily Life

1. Theoretical Concept

Short Description: Show how routines, boundaries, and supportive environments help sustain self-acceptance.

Key Theoretical Input: Small daily practices build long-term resilience and healthier relationship with oneself.

Multimedia Links: **VIDEOS:** [5 self-care micro habits to become unrecognizable](#) |

[Articles: 7 Daily Rituals to Improve Your Self-Esteem](#) |

2. Practical Activity Structure

Name of Activity: My Self-Esteem Action Plan

Goals: Transition learning into achievable steps for everyday life.

Materials Needed: Templates or blank paper, pens.

Duration: 30 minutes.

Step-by-step Instructions:

- *Identify one habit to reduce (e.g., negative self-talk, harmful comparison).*
- *Identify one supportive habit to add (e.g., journaling, mindful check-in).*
- *Write down 2–3 small, realistic goals for the next month.*
- *Set a specific time to do the new activity - ex. do a mindful check-in before bed, meditate in the afternoon and etc.*
- *Reflect on how the new activity adds up to your life - keep a tab on how it improves your day, why you need it?*

Reflection / Follow-up:

Share one goal with a peer for accountability; revisit progress in future sessions.



KEY LEARNINGS

Key Insights from the Module

- Self-acceptance and self-esteem are foundations of mental wellbeing, helping young people build self confidence.
- The inner critic and negative self-talk often harm self-worth, but reframing thoughts with self-compassion creates healthier self-perception.
- Identity, body image, and social comparison strongly influence how youth see themselves, especially under cultural and social media pressure to be or act a certain way.
- Practical tools like gratitude, mindfulness, and strengths-based reflection support the growth of self-esteem.
- Daily habits and small actions, for example, setting boundaries, journaling, or creating personal goals—help integrate self-acceptance into daily life.

Key Takeaways

Youth and youth workers should recognize that self-acceptance and self-esteem are essential for mental health and resilience. By understanding the impact of self-talk, social comparison, and body image, they can identify harmful patterns and replace them with supportive practices. Using practical tools like mindfulness, gratitude, and personal action plans helps build confidence, emotional wellbeing, and healthier relationships with themselves and others.





GLOSSARY

Self-Acceptance

Definition: Self-acceptance is the recognition and affirmation of one's own worth and value, acknowledging and embracing all aspects of oneself, including strengths, weaknesses, and imperfections.

Source: Rose, S. (2021). What is self-acceptance? Retrieved from <https://steverosephd.com/what-is-self-acceptance/>

Self-Esteem

Definition: Self-esteem refers to the overall sense of personal worth or value, influenced by how individuals perceive themselves and their achievements.

Source: American Psychological Association. (2021). Self-esteem. In APA Dictionary of Psychology. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.apa.org/self-esteem>

Self-Talk

Definition: Self-talk is the internal dialogue individuals have with themselves, which can be positive (supportive) or negative (critical), and significantly influences emotions, behavior, and mental health.

Source: Brinthaupt, T. M., & Dove, L. M. (2016). Making sense of self-talk. *Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice*, 3(2), 213–227. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cns0000079>





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