

## Excerpts from *The Self-Esteem Workbook for Teens . . .*

### (From the Introduction)

To Parents and Helping Professionals ~

The purpose of this book is to help teens - both those at risk and those simply traveling through an average adolescence - to develop or enhance a state of Healthy Self-Esteem, which is defined in the book as:

A general positive regard for oneself, including:

- an understanding and acceptance of one's weaknesses
- a celebration of one's strengths
- a realistic conviction regarding one's equality to others.

Teens with healthy self-esteem . . .

- are able to know and accept themselves
- practice compassion for both self and others
- act with integrity and self-discipline
- use healthy coping skills, both cognitively and behaviorally, to meet life challenges
- are convinced of their unconditional worth despite changing external circumstances
- are also convinced of and respect the worth of others.

To Teens ~

An underlying premise of this book is: *You are okay just the way you are.*

My hope is that you will learn to understand, accept, and embrace the truth of your inherent value as a living being. Because when you actually comprehend your equality to all other beings, you can open yourself to your own love and acceptance. And that is the foundation of healthy self-esteem.

### (From Activity 1: What Healthy Self-Esteem Means)

When Kati was younger, she thought everyone else was better than her - more attractive, more popular, more talented, and smarter. She felt like she never measured up, like she just wasn't good enough.

One day she saw her neighbor Tom practicing karate. Kati had always looked up to Tom; he could talk to anyone and always seemed at ease. She watched how peaceful and focused he was as he moved, and how strong he seemed, both physically and mentally.

"You are so smart and cool and confident," Kati told Tom. "I've always wished I could be like you. I get upset, I make mistakes, I say dumb things."

Tom put his arm around Kati and smiled. "Everyone gets upset, makes mistakes, and says dumb things sometimes. Everyone has fears and faults and insecurities - you just may not see them from the outside. Did you know I was so shy in grade school that I cried every morning before I got on the bus? And that I practice karate to manage anxiety?"

"But I thought you were so together!" Kati said.

"I'm human, just like you," Tom said. "You're just overly focused on your own imperfections and others' strengths, and you're basing your self-worth on that. We all come into this world the same, Kati. When you realize how equal everyone is, you'll feel better about yourself. Accept yourself and everyone else - we're all valuable, no matter what."

### **(From Activity 8: The Truth About Human Worth)**

There may be times when you believe you are flawed. You may think other people have value and worth but for some reason you don't. You may think that somewhere deep inside, you are just wrong.

Know this: Every human being who ever lived came into this world with value and worth. There has never been an exception. This includes you. . . .

We all arrive as miracles. It is only our thoughts that tell us otherwise.

### **(From Activity 23: Peer Pressure)**

When friends try to talk you into thinking, feeling, or acting a certain way, it's called peer pressure. People do this to feel better about themselves. When people have healthy self-

esteem, they don't need to pressure others. When people have healthy self-esteem, they don't need to give in to peer pressure. . .

When some kids at school learned that Samantha's parents would be away for the weekend, they urged her to have a party. . . Sam didn't know what to do. Some of the popular kids who never talked to her were asking her to invite them. . . It felt awesome to have so many people paying attention to her. . . Sam talked to her best friends . . . Jessica said, "Don't let people push you around. Do what you really want to do." "I'll be your friend either way," said Anna. "Do what you want." That was the problem - Sam really wanted all these kids to keep liking her, and she wanted to keep her parents' trust, too.

Tell what you think Samantha should do and why.

If Samantha has the party, who will be her friends that night?

If Samantha doesn't have the party who will be her friends that night?

If Samantha has the party, who will be her friends two weeks afterward?

If Samantha doesn't have the party, who will be her friends two weeks afterward?

Tell who you think has healthy self-esteem in this story and why.