

Definitions

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Definitions Define self-esteem, including contingencies of self-worth. When might the pursuit of self-esteem be harmful to individuals? When might threats to self-esteem be helpful? Self-Esteem refers to the evaluative component of self-concept (Baumeister, 1998; Coopersmith, 1967). This is the feelings that one gets when doing self-evaluations. It is how a person sees themselves and judges themselves. The contingencies of self-worth may be a favorable view of themselves, thinking that they are competent, likable, attractive and successful may help them to believe they are worthy and increase levels of self-esteem. Self-esteem may also be influenced by the expectations of others. The approval of others is one example of the contingencies of self-esteem. Other examples of the contingencies of self-esteem are: appearance, competition, academic competence, family support, virtue and God's love. There is a darker side to self-esteem, people that constantly pursue elevated levels of self-esteem have traits that are similar to those that are associated with materialism. People that make choices based on others perceptions of them rather than what makes they happy are depriving themselves of well-being. They give up their own autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and personally expressive actions. Threats to self-esteem can also be helpful. While experience threats to self-esteem people may learn to come up with better coping skills than they may have previously possessed. By experiencing these threats, they learn to overcome obstacles in turn, they may actually boost their self-esteem by learning that they are capable of overcoming these challenges.