



CREATING SAFE SPACES

Life skills, body image and self-esteem

The influence on sexuality and well-being

Establish class values



- We will be talking about sexuality, gender, pleasure, abuse and safety in these sessions. What will make this class a safe space for everyone to share, express their views and discuss freely?
- How do we want others to behave?
- How will we behave?

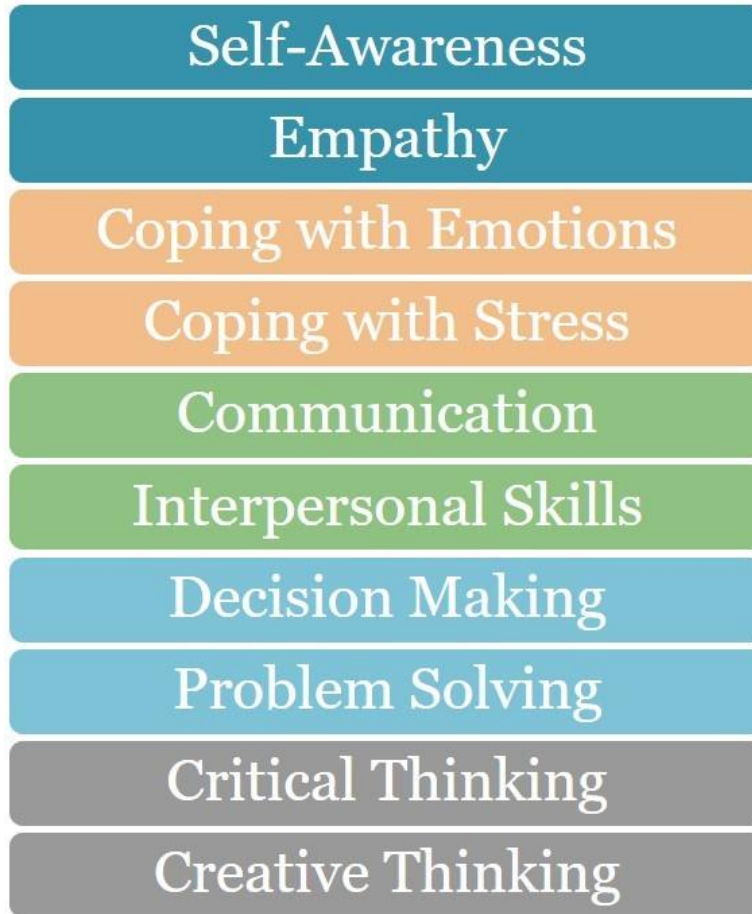
The World Health Organization states that, *“Life skills education is designed to facilitate the practice and reinforcement of psychosocial skills in a culturally and developmentally appropriate way; it contributes to the promotion of personal and social development, the prevention of health and social problems, and the protection of human rights.”*

In this program, we focus on life skills as a way of enhancing one’s sense of intrapersonal and interpersonal well being, as a way of enhancing one’s self-esteem, conviction in oneself and asserting one’s needs and rights.

Different life skills



WHO recommended 10 life skills



Classified into 5 areas:

- Self-awareness and empathy
- Coping with emotions and coping with stress
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Decision-making and problem-solving
- Critical thinking and creative thinking

What is self-esteem?



A person's feelings about one's own **worth**, how much one values oneself, likes oneself and accepts oneself.

Self- Esteem impacts

- confidence levels
- sense of agency and ability to assert one's rights
- belief that one is important and deserves to be respected/ treated well
- conviction to pursue one's ambitions and not give up
- belief in own ability to move things and get things done

What impacts self-esteem?



- Self-esteem varies as we grow up, with a dip in our self-evaluations especially during adolescence when our bodies are changing, our ideas of ourselves are being influenced by what friends and family say about us and how they treat us
- Changes corresponding to how we 'match-up' to what we see and compare ourselves to.
- Cultural norms and expectations also impact how we begin to think of ourselves (beautiful? competent? successful? hard working? lazy?)
- Parenting styles and parental judgements
- Self-awareness - awareness of our strengths, qualities, values
- RTE 2009 prohibits physical punishment and mental harassment to a child due to its effect on children and adolescents.

Attaining a healthier self-esteem



What can we do to have a healthier self-esteem?

Body Image



- Our body image reflects how we feel about our body, the attitudes, feelings and perceptions about one's physical appearance which are shaped by social and cultural norms of a society who determine what is an 'ideal' body shape.
- Society's standard of an attractive body may not always correspond with our body itself - this causes significant distress when comparisons/ observation are made
- Reflection of self-esteem - **How you see or picture yourself**

What influences body image issues



- The social environment and what is considered desirable or not
- Moral policing of people for their bodies leads to an increase in negative perception of their bodies (eg. don't show too much skin, don't accentuate body parts)
- Parental inputs and role modeling of what is considered appropriate, 'decent' or not, what can help ensure socio-economic benefits when their children appear for jobs or marriage, puts pressure to conform to the perceived ideal body



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Why is it important to address body-image concerns?

Body-image and mental health



Body image issues have been correlated with self-esteem, depression, and disordered eating behaviours

- APA reported that sexualising of the female body affects the mental and physical health of women and has cognitive and emotional consequences leading to shame, anxiety and self-disgust
- 40% of the LGBTQIA+ community experienced shame due to body image dissatisfaction, as opposed to 18% of cis - het participants

Queer identities and body image dissatisfaction



- Mannerisms, dressing styles, or body expression such as wearing colourful clothes for men or wearing short hair for women that are gender non-conforming often leads to bullying.
- Drag culture has become a powerful source of disrupting existing norms of gender expression.
- creates a space to alleviate body image concerns, assert self-love and expression.
- Drag shows provide a community that fosters body positivity and a platform to perform their sexuality

Visual messages from media/ culture



These are modern images.

But body image is not a modern issue

Through history, there are instances of body being altered to conform to the accepted norms of a particular society to the extent of mutilation even.

The body is not the goal but a means to achieving the goal.

While we may **appreciate** someone's body, whom do we **respect**?

Beauty



Beauty is linked to symmetry. Symmetry is one of the marker of genetic health - we feel attracted towards it and call it beautiful.

Extreme asymmetry is often associated with genetic disorders. Most people are not extremely beautiful - but are reasonably healthy.



**Eyes too far apart, or
set too close together/
other asymmetries,
reduce attractiveness**

Source



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What steps can we take to ensure a healthier way forward?

This PowerPoint is part of a project to prevent gender based violence. This project is supported by Ford Foundation.



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Thank You!

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On crimes against women, laws, interventions and
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