

PARENT HANDOUT: HOW TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF



ADHD Skill 9

WHAT IS HOW TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF?

- ▶ The challenges children with ADHD experience can make it easy for them to get down on themselves. How to Feel Good About Myself is a set of strategies to help your child be their own cheerleader, feel better about tackling difficult tasks, and remember that everyone faces challenges. These techniques also help your child notice if they are being hard on themselves and then take steps to feel better.
- ▶ By practicing this skill, your child will remember what makes them wonderful and special, even when they're having a hard time.

HERE'S HOW TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT YOURSELF

You can introduce this skill by saying, "All kids have times when they feel down on themselves. When that happens, it's important to remember what makes you special. Feeling good about yourself can help you do better at school, home, and with friends! Let's go through this list of strategies together and see if they help you feel better."

- 1 Make a list of your special qualities.** Each person has traits that make them unique. Make a list of 10 talents, skills, or characteristics that make you great. Ask your parents, teachers, and friends for more ideas based on what they like about you. Look at this list when you're feeling down or having a hard time remembering what's great about you.
- 2 Be kind to yourself.** If you find yourself feeling annoyed or frustrated, remember that having a positive attitude can make a big difference. Remind yourself that you can try to solve problems, improve the way you do things, and give your best effort each day. Everyone has things they are good at and things they find challenging. Try to focus on your strengths and treat yourself like you would treat a good friend.
- 3 Remember that your thoughts, feelings, and actions are connected.** How you think about a situation impacts how you feel about it, and how you feel about it effects how you act in that situation. You may not be able to control the way your brain works sometimes or change a challenging situation, but you can decide how you think about it in order to feel better and do better.
- 4 Give yourself a pep talk before starting a hard task.** When preparing to do something challenging, give yourself an encouraging pep talk. Follow the strategies in these worksheets, then remind yourself how hard you're working. Visualize yourself successfully completing your hard task. (E.g., Before Leah studies for her math tests, she tells herself, "I can do it! If I put my mind to it, I can do my best on this test!".)
- 5 If a task feels too challenging, take a break.** Taking a short break from a difficult task can make it feel less frustrating or overwhelming. Take a few minutes to stretch, listen to some music, take some deep breaths, or have a light snack. See if you feel better and are ready to try again.
- 6 If you feel unsure or stuck, ask for help.** Remember you don't have to go it alone. Make a short list of caring people you can talk to when you're feeling down or overwhelmed. This can include parents, teachers, friends, and other supportive people in your life. Turn to them for understanding and encouragement when things feel hard.
- 7 Don't give up!** Sometimes the first strategy we try doesn't work. If that happens, try another one (such as the other skills in this guide). Remind yourself not everyone gets it on the first try!
- 8 Track your progress.** As you work through the skills in this guide, be sure to notice if you are feeling and doing better. If so, give yourself credit for your effort and be proud of your hard work!

CHILD WORKSHEET: HOW TO FEEL GOOD ABOUT MYSELF



I'm a good older sister

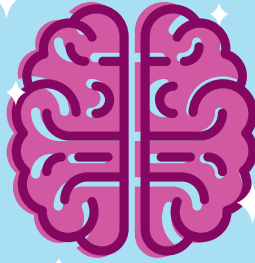
I'm good at science!

I love my family

I'm great at Minecraft

I take care of my dog

I try hard at soccer



MY SPECIAL QUALITIES

Use this space to make a list of your special qualities. These can be talents, skills, or characteristics that make you great. Ask your caregivers, teachers, and friends for more ideas based on what they like about you!

1

6

2

7

3

8

4

9

5

10

MY SUPPORTERS

Use this space to brainstorm a list of caring people you can talk to when you're feeling down or overwhelmed.





HOW CAN FEELING GOOD ABOUT MYSELF HELP MY FAMILY?

- ▶ Sometimes children with ADHD get frustrated with themselves for having a hard time paying attention, sitting still, doing homework, or getting along with others. This can lead them to think negative thoughts about themselves, avoid important tasks, or argue with family, friends, or teachers.
- ▶ Feeling Good About Myself provides strategies to increase your child's self-esteem and help them use coping strategies when they're feeling badly.

COMMON PARENT CONCERNS

When a task is hard, my child gets overwhelmed and wants to give up.

Completing difficult tasks can be challenging! When a task feels hard, encourage them to give themselves credit for the effort they've made so far. Then, they can take a short break to do something enjoyable, such as doing some light stretching, watching a short video, or getting a snack. They can also practice relaxation skills, which can help them calm both their body and their mind. See if these strategies help your child get back on track and ready to try again. If you find that your child is avoiding their work because it feels too hard, offer more help or talk to their teachers to get extra support.

Sometimes when my child thinks negative thoughts about themselves, they get "stuck" feeling badly.

This happens to almost everyone at some point. Children with ADHD can find it even harder to control their thoughts. Remind them that instead of beating themselves up, they can try to focus on their strengths and reset. Have them to read over their list of 10 special qualities, do something fun or soothing, or talk to someone supportive to get a new perspective. If you notice that they are thinking the same negative thoughts over and over, encourage them to remember that they're working hard and trying their best.

My child says they hate having ADHD! Everything feels harder for them.

Remember that there are many kids and adults with ADHD, so your child is not alone. A lot of people with ADHD are successful at reaching their goals. Using the strategies in this guide can make things easier and more manageable for your child at school and home. The more they practice them, the easier the skills will be to use on a daily basis and the better they will feel!

School can be especially challenging for those with ADHD, but school is not the only thing one can be great at doing. Remind your child that they can take steps to do better in school and that they also have their own special talents and skills.

If your child is feeling badly about needing extra support, remind them that getting help means they are doing everything they can to improve and succeed. This means they are committed to being the best "them" that they can be!

If feeling down about themselves gets in the way at school, home, or with friends, your child may need additional support. Check in with your primary care provider. They can connect you to a behavioral health specialist who can help.

