

## Image Gap

Answer the following questions honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. This is a chance to learn something about yourself.

### A. Read the list below. Check the five qualities you most admire in someone your age:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good grades at school            | <input type="checkbox"/> Has money/things                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good at art, music, and/or dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Attractive to the opposite sex              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cool clothes                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Popular/lots of friends                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Smart                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Liked by teachers                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mature                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring/sensitive                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good at sports                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Healthy/strong                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not afraid of parents/teachers   | <input type="checkbox"/> Funny/sense of Humour                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Good-looking                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Not influenced by what others say/<br>think |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tough                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                                |

### B. Fill in the qualities chosen in Section A in the spaces provided. Circle a rating from 1 to 10 to indicate how much you think that it applies to you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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**Image Gap: Problems and Strategies****Part A**

Choose three qualities that represent an "image gap problem" for you. Think of all the ways you could try to solve each "problem", then decide which is the best strategy.

Problem	Possible Strategies	Best Strategy
I wish...		
I wish...		
I wish...		

**Part B**

Answer these questions truthfully. The first question requires a little more care and thought, so try to spend more time on it.

1. What do you like best about yourself?

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2. What did you learn from this exercise?

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### Smoking, Self Image and Self Esteem

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According to the World Health Organization, self-esteem, self-image and tobacco use are directly linked. Adolescents who smoke tend to have low self-esteem, and low expectations for future achievement. Often they see smoking as a way to cope with the feelings of stress, anxiety and depression that stem from a lack of self-confidence.

Adolescent girls are more likely to cope with stress by "worrying," and then turn to cigarettes to cope with worry. Adolescents who see cigarettes as a way to handle negative feelings are more likely to ignore the long-term health consequences of smoking. Young non-smokers, on the other hand, tend to have higher self-esteem than teens that smoke.

Teen's attitudes towards their friends, classmates, boyfriends and girlfriends who smoke can make a difference to their own likelihood of smoking. Studies have shown that the single most direct influence on smoking among young teens is the smoking habits of their five best friends. Girls with a best friend who smokes are nine times likelier to become smokers themselves than those with non-smoking best friends.

Some teens believe that smoking cigarettes will improve their image, by making them appear more mature or "cool." Role models who smoke are frequently seen as tough, sociable and sexually attractive. For these teens, smoking is an attempt to improve the way they're perceived by friends and peers. Studies have shown that if peers do react positively to this strategy, then the new smoker is likely to continue smoking.

This attitude is not lost on tobacco advertisers, who portray smoking as a proof of adulthood, maturity, sophistication, popularity and sexual attractiveness. In the case of young girls, smoking is also equated with thinness - feeding on adolescent insecurities about body image. Being slim gives these girls self-confidence, and makes them feel fashionable. Surrounded by a culture that supports such beliefs, some teenage girls may see cigarettes as a way to attain these goals.

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**Source:**

Johnathan Samet and Soon-Young Yoon (eds.), "Women and the Tobacco Epidemic: Challenges for the 21st Century." The World Health Organization, 2001. Pages 66, 67.



## Be Your Own Best Friend

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### Know Yourself

Accept your strengths and your weaknesses.

Everyone has both!

### Accept Help

Some problems are too big to solve alone.

Confide in someone you trust, and lighten the load.

### Go Gently

Don't be hard on yourself.

Be careful not to expect too much, or to over-react to your mistakes.

### Be True to You

Don't try to be someone else. Be proud of who you are.

Pay attention to your own thoughts and feelings, and do what seems right for you.

### Control Self-Talk

Listen to the voice inside your head.

If you hear put-downs - "I'm so stupid." "I'm not worth it." "I should be more like him/her." - then STOP!

Take a deep breath, and change the tune to - "Everybody makes mistakes." "I deserve it." "How I am is good enough for me."

### Take Time Out

Spend some time alone and enjoy your favourite music, reading a book or magazine; or write in your journal.

### Stay Active

When you walk, run, dance and play hard, your body gets rid of nervous energy and tension. And when you feel fit and strong, you're ready to meet life's challenges.

