

## Modern Psychology

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### Chapter 1: Personality Psychology

#### Psychoanalytic Approach

Every human being has certain patterns in thinking, feeling, and acting. These patterns represent everyone's personality and provide the basis for that person's interaction with other people. In everyday life, there are people who are called aggressive, happy, sad, etc. Therefore, the study of personality helps in different areas of human behavior because personality is the true inner nature of a person. The unique impact a person has on others is equally important in understanding personality. However, the concept of personality has been defined by psychologists in different ways, and it is the theoretical perspective or position that directs our attention to certain aspects of personality. Personality is not fixed but dynamic, and it determines the type and degree of adaptation of a person to his environment, and this pattern of adaptation is unique. Personality is a more or less stable pattern, the degree of stability of which determines a person's compatibility with his environment. Personality usually refers to distinct behavioral patterns (including thoughts and feelings) that determine each person's adaptability to their life situations. Conscious, unconscious factors, determinism, freedom in performance, the role of early experience, the role of genetic factors, uniqueness, universality, etc., will be influential in drawing a person's personality. The human personality emerges due to the conflict between the aggressive and pleasure-seeking biological motives of the individual and the internal social restrictions against them. That is, personality is created in an effort to resolve conflicts. Human personality can be formed based on three paths:

- The unconscious and irrational path that is immune to the morality and demands of the outside world, and it works based on the principle of pleasure and seeks immediate satisfaction and conclusions.
- A conscious path that is involved with the functioning of the real world and operates based on the principle of reality and logic and regulates thoughts and behaviors, and also teaches a person to balance the demands of the outside world and the needs of the person.
- The path of internal representation of family (parents) and community values acts as the voice of conscience, which forces a person to consider ideal behavior as well, and failure to observe moral values causes shame, guilt, and anxiety in a person.

Also, from the age of three, boys compete with their siblings and fathers for their mother's attention. Boys at this stage become very dependent on their mother and may resent their father's presence. These feelings cause anxiety

or fear of their father's punishment, and to protect themselves from this anxiety, boys identify with their fathers. There is a reverse feeling for female children, and they will have a strong sense of dependence on their father. At the age of 6 to 12, the desire for activities such as sports, learning, and social activities will begin. At the end of 12 years, sexual desire towards the opposite sex will be very high. This stage of life is very sensitive for a teenager and will require training and care (without coercion) so that the person begins to develop positive relationships with others. If at some stage in life, a problem does not have a realistic solution or compromise, then the person uses denial or distortion of reality as a defense mechanism to avoid understanding reality and causing anxiety. Most anxieties are not consciously experienced but are controlled by defense mechanisms. Of course, excessive use of the defense mechanism may cause disturbances in thought processes and daily functioning. A mature and healthy person has the strength of the ego to reduce and balance the conflict, disturbance in thought processes, and daily performance, but when the ego experiences a lot of conflict, it will become weak. This creates rigid behavior patterns (psychotic resentment), and if adaptive functioning ceases, psychosis will develop. The defense mechanisms of a human are different stages such as suppression (refusal to recognize an inner reality or source of anxiety, pushing the unacceptable identity impulses to the unconscious and stripping them of their power to cause conscious disturbance to the individual), Denial (refusal to acknowledge the external source of anxiety), Projection (suppressing unacceptable impulses and then attributing them to others), Displacement (transferring feelings, changing the target of feeling and repressing feelings due to fear of showing or experiencing certain feelings against the person who provoked them and then transferring them to a safer body and releasing it) and rationalization (behavior that is justifiable, stable and worthy of self and community approval). A person who participates in the formation of the reaction suppresses the feelings that cause anxiety and then displays his personality in opposition to it, or may suddenly, his aggressive behavior give way to a more acceptable behavior, and not to deal with his anxiety, he simply leaves the scene of the conflict and goes back to the stage of apparent silence or peace. In order to create a dynamic personality, a balance must be established regarding the development and regression of psychic energy. That is, to achieve self-awareness, people must adapt to their external and internal worlds. Humans are motivated both through past experiences and through their expectations of the future. Also, extroverts are more influenced by their

subjective perception of the real world, while introverts rely on their individual view of things. Introverts and extroverts often mistrust each other and do not understand each other correctly. Human personality types are based on four approaches of thinking or recognizing the meaning of stimuli, feeling or placing a value on something, sensation or taking in sensory stimuli and intuition or perceiving elementary data that is beyond the individual's awareness, from are separated. In order to discover the hidden complexes in the subconscious of the injured person (spiritually), a method can be used in which the person is asked to say whatever comes to mind after being shown a picture or reading a word by the examiner. reaches to express. Unusual answers indicate a complex dream analysis and can be used to explain past events and make decisions about the future. Of course, the age of the audience is influential in these methods, and these two methods should be used based on the person's age. The best dynamic force in a person is to strive for success or excellence, and having a goal during the effort unites the components of a person's personality and makes all his behaviors meaningful. A person's effort can be considered in two ways: personal benefit (superiority) or social benefit (success):

- Striving for personal success: Psychologically unhealthy people strive for personal excellence (with little concern for other people). Although they appear to be interested in other people, their main motivation is self-interest.
- Striving for social success: Mentally healthy people strive for the success of all humanity and do this without losing their personal identity.

People's mental view of the world shapes their behavior, and stories are people's expectations of the future; sometimes, people act as if these stories are true. Of course, conscious and unconscious processes unite and act to achieve a single goal. Human behavior is so valuable that it is motivated by social interest (that is, a sense of oneness with all of humanity). Of course, social interest as an innate behavior exists in all people, but it must be properly cultivated in a social environment. The way a person strives in life creates a specific lifestyle for them, and of course, healthy people are characterized by flexible behavior. Lifestyle is partly a product of heredity and environment, but ultimately, lifestyle is formed through the creative power of people (skill in free choice). The most important factor in abnormal personality development (especially for unhealthy people) is the lack of social interest, and people with unhealthy lifestyles tend to set their goals too high and risky, and get lost in their private world. In some cases, physical or emotional deficiencies in an exaggerated form cause a feeling of hatred or mistrust in others, and it may cause long-term silence and remove a person's self-confidence. In these situations, the person either turns to silence due to fear of sudden events or attacks the other party (verbally or physically) in an explosive move. Such people try to keep their wrong feelings in order to protect their conscience. They try to belittle the achievements of others, try to comfort themselves by accusing others of being responsible for their failures, or try to hide their true feelings through physical movements. That means they cannot express their true feelings. Also, sometimes men and even women emphasize the desirability of masculinity too much, and to describe their personal traits and personality, they try to show themselves close to male traits. People's perception of how they fit into their family is related to their lifestyle. The first children in the family have a sense of power and superiority,

and of course, they are too conservative and have more than their share of anxiety. Second, children are very social and enjoy being the center of attention. The last and youngest children are pampered and lack independence. All these characteristics are temporary and may change according to individual conditions. In order to create a safe space for people's minds and help them reach relative peace, the types of needs and ways to reach them can be challenged. These needs include:

- A person's relationship with the outside world to preserve his personality and individual identity and to have a spiritual order (consisting of submission and silence, power and superiority, and love)
- Personal excellence (consisting of destroying the character and spirit of people or creating psychological security and caring for other people)
- Being rooted in the connection with the outside world (consisting of finding roots and feeling calm)
- Having a sense of identity (consisting of being aware of one's personality and way of thinking, having the motivation to create a personal identity)
- Orientation framework for registering individual identity in the surrounding world (consisting of having a suitable individual program or philosophy).

Also, when a person reaches infinite freedom, he becomes more confused and isolated. This type of freedom causes anxiety and loneliness in a person. In order to escape from this feeling, he can feel dictatorial and authoritarian, and when necessary, unite with a powerful partner, start destroying the character of others, or surrender to the demands of others. Every person communicates with the outside world to form and direct their own personality through analyzing their relationship with others, and the level of this communication determines the level of their sociability. People who are ready to accept this communication and direction in this direction, come to the conclusion that the best way to communicate with the outside world is to receive a positive signal through love, knowledge, and material objects. People with exploitative tendencies also think that the source of goodness is outside of themselves. But instead of getting it calmly, they get it aggressively. That is, false and unreasonable emotions and stress are always with them to achieve results. People with hoarding disorder try to save their savings, such as their opinions, feelings, and material possessions. People who have a marketing orientation see themselves as commodities, and based on their skill in selling, they value themselves and their personality. They have fewer positive characteristics than other orientations, and they don't feel good about them. Mentally healthy people move toward positive freedom through constructive work, love, and reasoning. Mentally unhealthy people have irregular and dangerous ways of working, reasoning, and loving. Examples include a love of death and hatred of all humanity, malignant narcissism, the importance of everything that belongs to the individual, the worthlessness of everything that belongs to others, and extreme dependence on family members. To treat such problems, the personality of the person in question must first be examined, and then his behavioral habits, such as dependence, superiority, transcendence, rootedness, and sense of identity, must be placed on a specific path so that over time he becomes stable in character. Due to the conditions and sense of competition in society, there is a possibility of

creating hostility and a feeling of isolation in individuals. These conditions create emotional illusions in humans, and to heal the feeling of loneliness, they use exaggerated expressions of interest and false respect. This behavior may arise from social conditions (present), childhood (past), and fear of reaching bad conditions in old age (future). The root of all hostility and insecurity is in childhood. All children need security, and they can only get it through parental love. But parents may ignore, reject, or overindulge in loving their children. An imbalance in parental behavior and emotions will create inappropriate conditions for children's security and emotions. If children suppress their initial feelings of hostility, it will create feelings of insecurity, anxiety, and fear in them. Behaviors such as kindness, calm speech, giving authority and power to the person, and ownership will reduce anxiety and fear. Normal people will be flexible with these behaviors, but unhealthy people may become strongly dependent on one of these behaviors and experience hallucinations. There are also people who, despite being aware of tensions and fears (the lack of harmony between feelings and reality), have no problem with their circumstances and avoid self-pity and arguing. That is, they accept the existing conditions without protest. If the situation becomes more acute and the person cannot solve his problems and return to normal conditions, then he will develop self-hatred and no longer love himself, because in reality he cannot defend his interests and will experience stress in confronting others. He loses what he considers his right because he is unable to speak his mind directly to the other person. Therefore, he either uses shouting as a means of self-defense or convinces himself that he must remain silent. The person may feel momentary peace at that moment, but after a while, he will analyze this issue for himself, and gradually he will experience turmoil and conditions such as relentless demands on himself, merciless self-accusation, self-contempt, self-frustration, or self-torture and self-destructive actions and impulses. Anxiety is an unpleasant state of internal turmoil, often accompanied by nervous behaviors such as pacing back and forth, physical problems, and mental fantasies. This is an unpleasant mental feeling of fear of something that is unlikely to happen (such as a feeling of impending death). Unlike fear, anxiety is not a realistic feeling of fear or danger but rather a feeling of worry and unease that becomes generalized after a few moments and becomes generalized as an overreaction to a situation that is only perceived as threatening in a subjective sense. Anxiety is often accompanied by restlessness, fatigue, concentration problems, and muscle tension.

The Influence of Each Person's Traits on Their Personality

The permanent traits and characteristics of personality which compel an individual to behave uniformly crossways different situations. People can be compared by measuring these traits. Of course, these traits are relatively permanent because they may change over time. Introversion or extroversion is a bipolar trait. Introverts are self-centered and have characteristics such as

being idealistic, imaginative, shy, and withdrawn. They are often in states of thinking, dreaming, and daydreaming. These people spend a lot of time making decisions and are worried about the future. But extroverts are more inclined to social activities and have characteristics such as realism, talkativeness, and activity, and they also show more interest in leadership. Of course, very few people are completely extroverted or introverted, and most people have both introversion and extroversion characteristics simultaneously. The level of cortical arousal is what differentiates introverts and extroverts. Extroverts have a lower threshold for cortical arousal, and little stimulation is enough to activate them. Introverts, on the other hand, have very high cortical arousal and are not affected by stimulation from the external environment. Neuroticism is also a bipolar dimension, and neurotic people have specific characteristics and behavioral tendencies. They show a lack of emotional control and willpower with disruptions in their thought processes and actions (i.e., this trait will be shown by their slow thinking at certain moments). Even very small problems and mistakes of others will bother them. People with high neuroticism have high emotional sensitivity, high suggestibility, and low sociability. On the other hand, people with high stability are calm and do not get upset by conflicting issues. This means that they can keep themselves under control even in the most difficult situations. They can maintain their composure even in the worst situations and think about the problem in a balanced way to reach the right decision. Neurotic people have a more reactive autonomic nervous system and are vulnerable to environmental stimuli, and may also have disorders such as phobias, anxiety disorders, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Psychotic people are characterized by a lack of concentration, poor memory, and a lack of sensitivity. They are more concerned with themselves than with others, and their behavior is cruel and emotional. They cannot protect themselves from danger and dangerous situations. In addition to temperament traits, there are also motivational traits such as attitudes (Attitude towards a particular action or tendency to act in response to a given situation), ergs (Innate motivations such as sex, hunger, loneliness, pity, fear, curiosity, pride, sentimentality, anger, etc.), and sems (Learned or acquired dynamic traits) in humans. A person's genetic traits also have a great influence on the stability of their personality, and these traits can be divided into two categories: fluid intelligence (the skill of adapting to new material) and crystallized intelligence (which depends on previous learning). Personality traits can be summarized under five headings: Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (Table 1-1). These traits represent a range of different personality types, and a person may develop a personality disorder or bipolar personality (e.g., become more introverted or extroverted over short periods of time, respectively / Conscientiousness increases through adulthood to middle age / Adaptability increases with age. Neuroticism and Extraversion decrease with age, etc.).

Title	Description
Openness to Experience	This trait includes an appreciation for art, emotion, innovation, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experiences. Openness refers to a person's degree of intellectual curiosity, creativity, and preference for novelty and variety. It is also described as the degree to which a person is imaginative or independent in solving problems.



conscientiousness	This trait refers to a person's tendency to be self-disciplined, conscientious, competent, thoughtful, and to strive for success. It is distinct from ethical concepts (having a conscience) and focuses on the amount of deliberation a person engages in their behavior. People who are high in conscientiousness prefer planned behavior over impulsiveness and are often organized, hardworking, and reliable. People who are not conscientious (disorganized people) have a more relaxed approach and are spontaneous.
extraversion	Extroverts have characteristics such as high energy, positive emotions, talkativeness, boldness, sociability, and a tendency to seek motivation and potentially risky activities in the company of others, but introverts have characteristics such as loneliness, silence, participation in small groups and sparsely populated activities, and doing secretive things.
agreeableness	The trait of agreeableness leads a person to be compassionate and cooperative and away from suspicion and hostility towards others. It is also a measure of a person's trustworthiness and good humor.
neuroticism	This trait is characterized by the experience of unpleasant emotions such as anger, anxiety, depression, or vulnerability. It is also a measure of a person's emotional stability and behavioral control.

Human Perspectives

Humanistic or phenomenological theories of personality offer a positive and optimistic view of human behavior. If a person is placed on the path of collective experiences, he will experience problems arising from unconscious collective motivations and conflicts, and if he is placed on the path of individual experiences, then he will experience a path that includes individual experiences, relationships, and ways of understanding the world. All humans need attention, approval, and love, and these needs are developed from childhood. Each person's feelings about themselves are determined by the reactions of others, and if a person feels that others are not satisfied with them, this feeling will also affect their own behavior and feelings. Of course, if a person's goal is only to please others, they may experience disruption in their own personality and behavior development. Self-actualization means experiencing a positive outlook on life, full of love and affection (without any conditions), and achieving an independent personality. Of course, all humans have the same capacity for self-actualization, but the conditions and ways to achieve it are different for each person. All humans desire to move towards the fulfillment and realization of their potential in life. Of course, there are special and unique circumstances for humans. Also, the feeling of self-actualization and the creation of personal identity begin in infancy. The creation of identity for each person includes two parts: internal identity (all the real characteristics of the individual's identity) and external identity (the person's ideal view of himself). After the formation of an individual identity, the person resists the changes made in his identity and tries to eliminate the gap created between his current identity and his ideal identity. If he succeeds in this, he will achieve his goal, but if he cannot do this, a level of psychopathology will be created in his mind and identity. This damage may cause many psychological problems for him over time. In terms of personal identity, people can be divided into three groups:

- People who lack self-confidence and give up easily, and are therefore ignored by others
- People who try to change themselves and their personal identity to attract the attention of others.
- People who have a fixed behavior and identity express their opinions freely and do not allow others to interfere.

To maintain their identity, humans must pay attention to two stages:

maintenance (which includes nutrition, air, safety, and security) and enhancement (which includes completing and realizing existing potentials). When there is a conflict between a person's identity and the expectations of their audience, the person will feel vulnerable, threatened, defensive, and anxious. This causes the person's nervous system to malfunction, and they may develop psychosis. If a person lives a life that is different from their true nature and abilities, they will be less happy than those whose goals and lives are in line with them. That is, if that person has the inherent potential to become a great artist, teacher, or scientist but has to focus their energy on meeting basic human needs, then they may never discover their inherent talents. Self- actualization in each person means inner growth and creating a driving force to achieve the ideals of that person's mind, and if a person sometimes acts at a level lower than self- actualization, his or her personal growth may be hampered and he or she may go astray (i.e., it becomes easy for him or her to endure problems and give up trying to achieve a better life). Also, people who achieve self-actualization after a while prefer cultural problems to personal problems and try to first take steps to solve cultural problems, and solve personal problems at a later stage. This means that these people have reached psychological and intellectual maturity. Self-actualization of an individual has beautiful and stable characteristics:

- A person can judge situations correctly and honestly by using their understanding and thinking, and also show sensitivity to unreal issues, dual personalities, and liars. That is, they express reality freely and as it is.
- Acceptance of their own flaws, others, and nature. That is, in addition to expressing their opinions freely, they tolerate the problems and flaws of others.
- They are disciplined in carrying out daily tasks and solving problems, and are not afraid of resisting difficulties. That is, they do not become aggressive towards others because of their own problems and do not behave demandingly if they try to solve the problems of others.
- A person has a sense of autonomy and acts like a resourceful and independent person.
- A person has a fresh and stable spirit. That is, even if they are in the most difficult circumstances, they still appreciate the love of others and do not turn small inconveniences into serial depression.



- The person has deep human emotions and a strong sense of fellowship with others.
- The person is not afraid of loneliness, despite having satisfying relationships with others.
- The person has a balanced sense of humor (avoid mocking others).
- The person has a sense of security and is not anxious.

Of course, people may have the same circumstances but behave very differently. This proves that a person's attitude can have a great impact on their fate.

### Eliminating the Notions Based on the Being Dumb of the Personality

A person with mental problems may come to the conclusion that he has a dumb and ambiguous personality and that no one can understand him and help him when he has mental and personality problems. But on the contrary, a person with a stable identity, along with internal growth, imagines a greater place for himself, and this improves his relationships with others. All humans need psychological counseling to bring their disturbed or calm mind to the desired conditions. If this internal growth and counseling are not done, the person will suffer from mental torment and pain. Therefore, the inner workings of the mind should be examined using the process of meditation and awareness of the mind in order to achieve mental and spiritual health. A person with mental problems has a strong dependence on his mental images and illusions and creates imaginary problems and enmities for every everyday issue and gives them wings and wings in his mind, and because these thoughts and judgments are always changing, he suffers from intellectual and personality obsessions. He suffers from personality fragmentation and has no stability in his personality, and may experience great anger and hatred towards others and his surroundings when he is very happy, or may behave naturally and happily when he is sad and upset. This type of behavior causes others to distance themselves from him and feel bad about him, while he considers his behavior appropriate and considers others to be superficial people. At this stage, his illness intensifies, and he becomes a dual personality. A person who achieves stability of character learns to live in harmony and with a plan. Not to be a passive observer but an active participant in personal and social life. Humans must be careful about three things (selfish desires, customs, false teachings, and superstition) and be careful of their minds to understand these three things correctly. Otherwise, they will suffer from many personality and spiritual problems. Every person can develop their inherent talents to achieve peace of mind and a better life, and strive to develop their personality (recognizing each person's inherent talents is a way of salvation for them). Also, being patient at this stage leads to achieving moderation in a person's behavior. There are many ways to use one's strengths and virtues to achieve a meaningful life. One of these ways is to participate in sports classes. Each person's strengths and discovering their talents are a good way to create a universal language and unity among people. People express their strengths in different ways, depending on the circumstances they find themselves in. The best test for understanding the personality and balance in each person's inner psyche is their level of satisfaction with life.

## Chapter 2: Examining Children's Aggressive Behaviors

### What is Aggression?

Aggression is a negative, tense, and offensive behavior that is carried out by a person against others. This behavior is carried out due to an internal feeling

of fear when losing a certain situation and due to an imbalance in power. Aggressive people are opportunists, and their goal is to abuse the situation. They show this reaction to show their protest, and even if they are not right, they use this method to achieve their goal. This behavior may be carried out in a specific period of time, but over time, it will become a habit in the aggressive person. This behavior is possible from elementary school (ages 7 and up). The first problem caused by anxiety (in a social environment) occurs for every person from elementary school to high school. That is, an aggressive person may be forced to drop out of school due to intolerance of his educational environment, and this behavior may become a daily habit for him, and he may avoid going to certain places, attending social gatherings, and family events. Then, he may not even be able to tolerate being at home and his family and run away from home. At this stage of life, a person experiences turmoil and confusion in his personality, and others can easily take advantage of him because the person makes spur-of-the-moment decisions and loses the ability to control his life. One of the biggest reasons for this type of aggression in children and adolescents is having certain illnesses or physical disabilities. The best solution to solve this problem is to establish counseling centers to educate the families of these children so that they can perform their best in controlling behavior and giving self-confidence to their children. The school can also motivate these children to participate in classes by providing facilities and creating a safe environment for them. There is also no need to separate aggressive children from other children. They should be in the company of others so that they do not become isolated and depressed. Some depressions are hidden, and although the person has a smile on his face and a normal appearance, he has a disturbed mind and a heart full of resentment, and may make wrong decisions in the moment and harm others. Therefore, the presence of these children in the company is necessary; only a caregiver (such as teachers) should be with them and control their behavior from a distance. This care should be reduced over time so that its presence does not cause confusion in the child's mind. Not all aggressive children can be treated, but this type of behavior can be cured in most of these children and will eliminate the root of many crimes and misdeeds in the future.

### Analysis of Types of Aggression

Aggression is divided into two types: direct and indirect. Direct aggression can be verbal or physical in nature, and indirect aggression includes behaviors such as taunting, teasing, name-calling, and spreading rumors. Boys are more likely to use physical violence (direct aggression), but girls are more likely to use verbal violence (indirect aggression). Direct aggression includes behaviors such as hitting, kicking, pushing, choking, and destroying property or stealing, and indirect aggression includes behaviors such as threatening, making obscene gestures, excluding others from the group, and manipulating friendships. Another common type of aggression is gender-based aggression (often perpetrated by men). That is, a person tries to humiliate the other person by denigrating their gender. Also, people who do not come to the aid of an aggressive person when they are in trouble or threatened also cause harm to them. Because an aggressive person does not receive any support from the community, he feels lonely and, over time, avoids the company of others. It is even possible that children and adolescents who are victims of aggression and threats will live in an environment full of stress and anxiety. If they are not supported by family

and friends, they will suffer from personality confusion and may become a dual-personality person. The newest type of aggression is in cyberspace (the Internet environment). There are many false and biased materials in cyberspace, and if children and adolescents have access to them without any restrictions, they may become victims of violence or their thoughts may be directed in the wrong direction. Also, playing unconventional music in kindergartens and elementary schools is extremely harmful to the child's mind and may take the child's mind away from the educational environment. School is an environment for educating a child; neither aggressive behavior nor creating unlimited freedom for the child is appropriate. He should be taught scientific education and discipline, and should be prevented from teaching things that are not within his age range (After reaching the age of maturity, every child can decide whether to listen to music or not, whether to use cyberspace or not, what career to choose for himself, etc.). Aggressive people have no empathy or concern for others and also have a strong desire to dominate their peers. These people are hot-tempered, easily angered, and choose their victims from among the quiet and weaker people. Aggressive people feel opposition, hatred towards adults and people stronger than themselves, and are ready to hurt them at the right opportunity. Aggressive people do not have a proper understanding of the behavior of others and consider all the words of the other person as a kind of irony or insult to themselves (Because of their disturbed thoughts and minds, they often do not

have the ability to analyze the behavior and words of others and suffer from misunderstandings). Therefore, one must be extremely careful in the way they treat them, because in this way, they can be helped and their sense of hatred can be reduced, and their trust in themselves can be gained. One of the reasons why an aggressive person chooses a victim is the difference (type of behavior, thinking, clothing, and weakness in social skills) of the victim from others. One of the most important reasons that causes aggression in a child is not having friends. Feeling lonely and isolated in friendly groups will create a sense of insecurity, fear, and hatred towards others. Continuing this feeling may lead to severe depression and even suicide, so children should be helped psychologically and mentally so that they can participate in friendly groups (at school and in the family). Isolated and reclusive children may be ridiculed and humiliated by their classmates and friends because of their different behavior. Therefore, the family should pay attention to their special behaviors from an early age and help them solve these types of problems. If the main culprit of the children's behavior is their family (violent fathers and violent or overly conservative mothers), then school officials are obliged to help these children by using expert counselors and maintain their psychological and mental security. There are many reasons for a child's aggression that can be traced by examining the child's behavior (**Table 2-1**). Also, a feeling of insecurity causes the child to lack focus in learning, and a sense of anxiety and danger always accompanies him.

Type of Aggression	Describe it
Full off stress and paranoia	The person is hot-tempered, belligerent, fearless, overconfident, and lacking in empathy for others. He craves superiority and dominance over others, and reacts violently in ambiguous confrontations. He also has no desire to follow rules and shows very little tolerance in times of trouble and when frustrated.
Rough	The person has never been a victim, and the root of his aggression is not due to psychological trauma. He is interested in the school environment and friendly groups. He is not always aggressive; he only shows his sense of aggression when he wants others to confirm his words or to dominate others, and those around him may not confront his aggression because they do not feel much danger.
Passive	The person rarely provokes others or is not the one who initiates aggression in an argument or fight. At first, he waits for a fight or argument to start, then he enters and starts being aggressive (even if the issue has nothing to do with him). That is, he does not have the courage to start a fight, but when the fight starts, he tries to provoke others.
Victim of violence	The person is a victim of violence and aggression, but when he encounters people who are weaker than him, he becomes aggressive towards them (He eliminates his hatred for those stronger than himself by taking revenge on those weaker than himself.). That is, in addition to the disease of aggression, he also has an internal fear disease. The person tries to carry out his violence in the absence of others and in secret, and the person harasses the victim in secluded places.

Table 2-1. Types of Aggressive People.

A person's aggressive behavior has a negative impact on those around them and will create a bad feeling, combined with despair. The increase in this feeling among other children will create a hopeless society and a regression in the mental maturity of the younger generation. That is, the minds of children will be in intellectual conflict, and their learning ability will decrease, and this may become a habit in society. People who witness aggression between two people may have misunderstandings, may not show an appropriate emotional response, and may create a gap and distance between them and the aggressive person, because they do not have a clear

understanding of the situation, and this contradiction and question mark will become a problem in the future. Children have curious minds and may feel guilty if they cannot mediate between the aggressive person and the victim. Therefore, even the smallest aggression from children should not be ignored because it may cause major problems in the children's future social relationships. Every child has the ability to learn the content and behavioral skills to build positive relationships. Even aggressive children can change with the right resources. That is, all members of society deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, and respectful behaviors should be modeled. Also,





some children who are victims of aggression may not be able to share their problems with their parents. Therefore, school officials should have continuous communication with the child's family and try to inform the family about his problems while maintaining the child's calm. Simply controlling children and scaring them from bad behavior is not enough. An environment must be provided where the child feels safe, can express his problems, and does not run away from implementing the educational model. Children who reach social maturity can face problems without violence and anxiety, and will perform best in finding friends, planning their education, and marriage. A child who is not mentally challenged can create a wall between himself and staying up all night, drugs, betrayal of loved ones and be a humane role model for the rest of society. The mental health of individuals will have a great impact on the health of the economy, culture, and civil society, and will promote trust and security among the members of society. Therefore, providing appropriate education and easy access to educational resources is very important to strengthen and cultivate social competence in children.

### Chapter 3: Problems Caused by Attention Deficit in Children Preactivity

Preactive children are always on the move, playing with objects around them, or talking nonstop. They have difficulty sitting still at dinner or during class. Because they have an inner sense of restlessness and may multitask. They often express inappropriate opinions, show their emotions without restraint, and do what they want without regard for the consequences. They generally dislike waiting and explaining why they do things. Some examples of precocity in children can be examined as follows:

- Feeling restless in the arms or legs, or slouching when sitting
- Running, climbing, or leaving a chair when one is expected to be quiet and seated
- Starting to answer before hearing the whole question
- Having trouble standing in line or taking turns
- Lack of concentration in learning and poor memory
- Inattention to daily tasks, lack of willpower, and early fatigue in doing tasks
- Lack of attention to detail and forgetfulness
- Starts doing something else before finishing it (temperamental and unstable personality).

Pre-active children have characteristics such as daydreaming, being confused about everyday matters, being slow in movement, and being impatient. Their speed of processing information is not like that of normal children, and they may reach conclusions earlier than others at times and later at times, but in general, they have difficulty expressing them. That is, there is a contradiction between their mind and their ability to express it. These problems become more apparent when doing schoolwork, and the child may not even show the problems in his behavior (and appear to be memorizing), but may not be able to do the homework when he is mentally ready. At this time, parents should help him with the help of a counselor and school teachers, and build self-confidence in the child. Because beating and punishment will cause bigger problems in the child's future. Ignoring these types of children will only cause them to behave like secretive children. To eliminate delinquency in the future of society and block the ways for children to become criminals, they

must be supported and helped to solve their problems. Distrust and fear of the family and school environment will cause children to be secretive. Some parents may notice signs of inattention, hyperactivity, and aggression in their child before they start school. That is, the child may lose interest in playing a game or watching a TV program, or they may suddenly run around uncontrollably. Because children mature at different rates and vary greatly in personality, temperament, and energy levels, it is important to seek help from a counselor or child psychologist if you notice unusual behaviors. One of the most important points in raising children and maintaining their mental health is honesty. That is, parents should, along with teachers, school counselors, and pediatric specialists, try to maintain the child's health and solve their problems, and not be afraid to tell the truth and express the child's problems. One of the biggest problems is secrecy, so in order to build a better future in the lives of children, secrecy should be avoided. Because small problems in adolescence will cause the biggest problems in their future. The best parents are the ones who will say this to their child: Don't be afraid, I will always be by your side and help you. Tell me any problem you have. You are not going to be punished; we will just solve this problem together. I love you very much....

Some of the prominent reasons for aggressive or unusual behavior in children include:

- Sudden changes in the child's life (such as the death of immediate family members, parental divorce, loss of parental job)
- Unexplained and sudden seizures
- Middle ear infections and hearing problems
- Disorders that affect brain function
- Failure due to learning disabilities
- Anxiety or depression.
- A chaotic and stressful environment at home and in the classroom will also negatively affect a child's behavior. Some ways to assess a child's social adjustment and mental health include:
- Intelligence tests
- Exposure to noisy or unstructured situations, such as parties
- Solving math problems or playing a board game.

The child's degree of freedom of action in these situations, or their inability to do so, can be a good test of a child's personality, personal independence, and mental health. It can also be said that environmental factors do not cause mental illnesses in children, but they do affect the severity of the child's mental disorders. Of course, smoking and alcohol consumption during pregnancy are among the causes of personality disorders in children. Also, living in environments that contain lead and excessive use of sugar and food additives will have a great impact on increasing the severity of personality disorders in children. Despite all the environmental factors, it is the genetic structure that has the greatest impact on the development of personality disorders and aggression in each person. By examining the different parts of the brain, we come to the conclusion that the frontal lobes are a good tool for solving problems, planning ahead, understanding the behavior of others, and controlling anger. The two frontal lobes, right and left, communicate with each other through nerve fibers that connect the right and left frontal lobes. Also, interconnected gray matter deep in the cerebral hemispheres acts as a link between the cerebrum and the cerebellum and, together with the



cerebellum, is responsible for motor coordination. The cerebellum is divided into three parts that are studied using different methods for viewing or imaging the brain. These methods include functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), positron emission tomography (PET), and single-photon emission computed tomography (SPECT). This means that by examining all of these methods, the types of personality and mental disorders in children can be accurately and scientifically examined.

### Specialized Examination of Different Types of Personality Disorders in Children

To examine personality disorders in children in more detail, it can be said that children in preschool and kindergarten years may have difficulty understanding specific sounds or words or pronouncing words, and in the elementary school age, they may have difficulty reading text, writing texts, and doing mathematical calculations. Having various nervous tics, repetitive behaviors (such as blinking or shaking the face), unreasonably opposing others on all issues (such as stubbornness, inconsistency, and readiness for physical confrontations), lying, stealing even without financial need, and destroying public property and nature are other examples of child personality disorders that parents should examine. Of course, these problems cannot be eradicated by punishment, and attempts should be made to correct and resolve these problems with the help of child counselors and psychologists. Children may also develop bipolar personality disorder. In this way, they experience depression and anxiety at the same time, and their behavior fluctuates between being sad and happy, and they laugh or cry for no reason. Four methods can be used to treat personality disorders: medication, talk therapy, a combination of medication and talk therapy, and natural treatment with family and community. Of course, in all of the above cases, psychologists should be consulted, and self-treatment should be avoided. Ages 3 to 5 are the best time to start treating aggression in children. The first stage is speech therapy, and if the desired result is not achieved, medication should be used. The prescription and use of medication should be under the supervision of a doctor, and if the child has problems, the medication should be stopped immediately, and a doctor should be consulted. Also, when a child takes medicine, nutritious food should be with the child so that if the child has a stomachache after taking the medicine, he can solve this problem by eating food. Taking medicine on an empty stomach is harmful and may seriously damage the child's stomach or even brain. Therefore, it is necessary to eat a meal before taking the medicine. Parents should note that medications are prescribed to control the child's symptoms of aggression and disorders. That is, they are only to improve the child's illness and are not a stimulant or have a significant effect on increasing the child's intelligence. Therefore, the child should not be forced to take too much medication, and if the child is sleepy or depressed, inform the doctor.

### Family Support and Its Impact on Resolving a Child's Illness

Parents should know that taking medication will help the child behave better with family members in everyday life. That is, his behavioral problems will be resolved with medication, but eliminating his depression and aggression will take time, and they should be patient and compassionate in dealing with the child. Therefore, parents should help their child with the help of a specialist doctor and counselors, and use behavioral modeling techniques. This type of support and not being angry with the parents, will increase the child's self-confidence in treating his illness. Remember, you may not be to

blame for your child's problems, but he has no one to rely on except you. Therefore, in addition to the child, parents also need counseling to better understand the ways to treat the child. In talk therapy, patients talk to a therapist about distressing thoughts and feelings, explore self-destructive behavior patterns, and learn alternative ways to manage their emotions. As they talk, the therapist tries to help them understand how they can change or better cope with their disorder. Talk therapy helps people develop more effective ways to work through immediate issues. In social skills training, the therapist discusses and models appropriate behaviors that are important in establishing and maintaining social relationships, such as waiting for one's turn. Sharing toys, asking for help, or responding to teasing gives children opportunities to practice. Instead of helping the child understand their emotions and actions, counselors and psychologists can help change their thinking and behavior, and parents should seek opportunities to pay attention to what the child does well and praise his or her strengths and abilities. Also, to control the child's behavior and punish him when he does something wrong, they can set penalties such as forced reading of useful books, exercising, and so on. If the child has trouble performing their duties, parents should divide the job into small stages and encourage the child after each step. Parents should also use stress management methods to increase their tolerance for despair and respond more relaxed to their child's behavior. Many psychologists believe that in order to control children's behavioral disorders, you should write a consistent and permanent schedule for waking and sleeping times, and even computer and virtual games and force your child to follow and perform that schedule, but in my opinion, you should talk to your child in childish language and arrange and regulate his environmental conditions in such a way that order in his work becomes a habit for him. Of course, creating this safe and orderly environment depends a lot on your mental state and intellectual taste. As a parent, you should know that when facing your children, forget all your problems and preoccupations. Try to wake your child up every morning by stroking and singing children's songs. Also read children's stories and songs to him at bedtime. This story reading will fade over time, and as the child grows older, until the child reaches intellectual independence in terms of environmental conditions. Try not to introduce computer games to your child. These types of games are very harmful to mental health and vision. You can use physical games and different toys. Your child may not like these types of games at all and will go towards computer games, but you should try and calmly and kindly try to convince your child. You don't need to brainwash your child and make him a thoughtless person. Just introduce him to the right way and avoid creating tension and arguments in front of your child.

### Overcoming the Challenges of Adolescence

Parents should re-evaluate their children's health as they finish elementary school and start high school. Adolescence is challenging for most children (especially aggressive children). The desire to be independent, try new things, and do unconventional social activities such as alcohol, drugs, sexual activity, etc., can lead to unpredictable problems. Going through this stage is the biggest challenge for a teenager. Proper communication between the teenager and parents can help them overcome this stage with minimal challenges. Of course, parents may disagree on how to deal with their child, which will create unpredictable obstacles. One of the most important things that will make a child calm in overcoming his problems is that he does not



see himself as the reason for the arguments and conflicts between his parents. If you want to give your children self-confidence, do not argue in front of them and do not let them enter your marital space. If your child has an unreasonable request, before opposing and being aggressive, you should listen to what he says and the reasons for it, give reasons for your opinion, and negotiate with him calmly. Your driving style and excessive use of cyberspace and mobiles can be a role model for your children. You can teach your child the correct culture of using personal facilities by driving appropriately and using mobiles and cyberspace in a timely manner. By making changes in their challenges and aggression, adolescents can adapt to a healthy life and, by achieving small successes, gain the necessary motivation to have the energy to achieve greater success.

#### **Chapter 4: Examining the Stages of Adolescent Development**

##### **Establishing Professional Boundaries to Help with Adolescent Mental Health**

The first step in helping with adolescent mental health in adolescence is for families and social systems, such as schools, to understand professional boundaries. For example, social workers will try to form parenting groups to provide counseling to families and will conduct psychological research on strategies in great detail, but lawyers do not need much of this information and may be stepping outside the boundaries of their professional role if they offer suggestions to parents about parenting practices. Physicians will also be the first point of contact for counseling on behavioral issues, such as substance abuse, because of their important role in interpreting the normal physical development of adolescents. Every profession should be aware of changes in their codes and regulations regarding their professional conduct with adolescents and their families, and their aim should be to describe the characteristics of adolescents and the aspects of them that will make a difference in promoting healthy adolescent development. Adolescence is often portrayed as a negative stage of life (a period of storms and stress that must be survived or endured). Most parents agree with their teens about the kinds of things that are important to them (such as encouraging success in school, setting boundaries, teaching shared values, teaching respect for cultural differences, guiding them in decision-making, providing financial guidance, etc.). Of course, parents may differ in their words and actions, and may only talk about these patterns. So, doing these things by parents creates a huge contradiction in the lives of adolescents. Of course, most adolescents succeed in school, are connected to their families and communities, and emerge from adolescence without experiencing serious problems such as substance abuse or involvement in violence. Despite occasional protests, adolescents need and want adults to be a part of their lives because they know that parents can protect them on their journey to adulthood. The biggest help for adolescents to communicate effectively with adults (parents and counselors) is to create a space and emotional bond between them. Adults need to find a way to communicate comfortably with adolescents and be flexible enough to gain the trust of their audience (adolescents). Adolescents need adults who listen to them, understand their opinions, appreciate them, and then guide or encourage them to use the information or services provided for their own health.

##### **Developmental Milestones in Adolescents**

The physical changes that occur in the body structure of girls and boys indicate the transition to adolescence. Of course, these physical changes are

only part of the developmental processes that adolescents will experience. Their developing brains bring new cognitive skills that increase their ability to reason and think abstractly. They grow emotionally and develop a new sense of who they are and who they will become. Their social development involves relating to peers and adults in new ways. And as they move from childhood to adulthood, they begin to experiment with new behaviors. Therefore, adolescent development includes physical, cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral development. Changes in one part of these stages will cause changes in others. Nor can any adolescent be fully understood outside the context of their family, neighborhood, school, workplace, or community, or without considering factors such as gender, race, and religious beliefs. Professionals working with adolescents need to know what constitutes normal development. What indicates early or late physical development in order to help adolescents prepare for the myriad changes that occur during this time of life? Several factors (such as genetic and biological influences, stressful events, socioeconomic status, nutrition and diet, body fat percentage, and the presence of chronic illness) influence the onset and progression of puberty. The growth spurt (rapid skeletal growth) begins between the ages of 10 and 12 for girls and 12 to 14 for boys and is complete around the ages of 17 to 19 for girls and 20 for boys. Professionals who work with children and their families can educate parents about the need to prepare their children for the changes of adolescence early and can provide helpful advice to parents and other adults about how to discuss puberty with teens. Teens should therefore be prepared for their puberty changes by the age of 9 or 10 so that they are not surprised when the changes occur. Parents should be alert to the signs of precocious and late puberty (especially precocious girls and late boys), as these teens are at higher risk for a number of problems, including depression. Precocious puberty is not as problematic for boys as it is for girls, but late-puberty boys are at higher risk for depression, conflict with parents, and problems in school. Adults may not be aware of the dangers of early puberty for girls and may not be prepared to help these teens cope with the emotional and social demands that may be placed on them. For example, older boys and even adult men may be attracted to precocious girls when girls have not yet developed the social maturity to cope with these developments, putting them at risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Professionals and counselors can talk to precocious youth and their parents about the possibility of facing peer pressure to participate in activities for which they are not yet emotionally ready. For most teens, simply saying “just say no” does not help them cope with stressful personal situations. Instead, professionals can help the teen identify and practice strategies in advance to cope with or avoid these situations. Parents may need guidance to understand that a teenager's independence should be related to the teenager's chronological age and social and emotional development, not to the level of physical development (whether early, on time, or late). Teenagers may spend hours a day worrying about their appearance in order to “fit in” with the norms of the group they most identify with. They also desire to have their own unique style and may spend hours in the bathroom or in front of the mirror to achieve this goal. When teenagers express concerns about aspects of their appearance (such as acne, glasses, weight, or facial features), parents should take these concerns seriously. Adults should understand the meaning and context of the teenager's concerns and keep the lines of communication open. Otherwise, the teenager may have difficulty keeping the problem (and

potential solutions) in perspective, or may not express their concerns in the future and avoid consulting with their parents. That is, they may develop an introverted personality. It can also be said that puberty is inherently associated with weight gain, and many adolescents express dissatisfaction with their changing bodies. In a society and culture where thinness is celebrated, some adolescents become overly concerned with their physical appearance and engage in obsessive dieting in an attempt to achieve or maintain a slim figure. A person may develop an eating disorder such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa.

### **The Impact of Sports and Physical Activities on Adolescent Development**

Participation in sport has important direct health benefits and is one of the socially acceptable areas where physical energy can be directed positively. Other activities that can be used to direct physical energy include dance, theatre, carpentry, cheerleading, hiking, skiing, and part-time jobs that involve physical demands. These activities provide opportunities for adolescents to exercise, make friends, gain competence and self-confidence, learn about teamwork, risk-taking, character building, and discipline. Of course, there may be barriers such as financial costs, lack of transport, time commitments to competitions, competitive pressures in sport, and lack of parental permission. Other barriers include a lack of access to safe facilities, such as recreation centres or parks. Some young people may also have other important responsibilities, such as work or caring for younger siblings, that prevent them from participating. Professionals should examine each of these barriers to determine how to overcome them to reduce barriers to participation. Professionals can also help adolescents and their parents understand the importance of physical activity and good nutrition for maintaining health and suggest healthy options. In doing so, it is important to consider the family's resources (such as the family's ability to pay for organized sports activities, and its cultural background, which may influence its diet, for example).

### **Adolescent Cognitive Development**

Changes in how adolescents think, reason, and perceive may go far beyond their obvious physical changes. Adolescents can think abstractly and in shades of gray. They can analyze situations logically in terms of cause and effect, challenge hypothetical situations, and use symbols and metaphors imaginatively. This higher level of thinking allows them to think about the future, evaluate alternatives, and set personal goals. Although there are distinct individual differences in cognitive development among youth, these new capacities allow adolescents to engage in a kind of introspection and mature decision-making that goes beyond their past cognitive capacities. Although there are a few differences in the cognitive development of adolescent boys and girls, adolescent boys and girls differ in their confidence in specific cognitive abilities and skills. Teenage girls are more confident than boys about their reading and social skills, and teenage boys are more confident about their athletic and math skills. Parents can help their children overcome these differences or weaknesses. That is, teenagers can focus and limit their choices and opportunities to the subject they are interested in. This will build self-confidence in the person. Contrary to stereotypes, teenagers prefer to consult their parents or other trusted adults when making important decisions about things like attending college, finding a job, or handling finances. Adults can use this opportunity to be role models and help their children make effective decisions when they are struggling with difficult

decisions. It is natural for teenagers to step over the red line and argue about side issues for no reason. Of course, this can be tiring for many adults. For teenagers, using new reasoning abilities can be exciting, and they need a chance to test these new skills. Even with their newfound capacity for logical thinking, teenagers may achieve surprising results. However, a teenager may try to mask their anxiety by verbally compromising a situation and behaving rudely. Instead of correcting their behavior and giving them an argument, teenagers should first be allowed to express themselves and listen calmly to what they have to say. Parents can build trust by being good listeners. Adolescents should not be asked to maintain appearances because they may start to hide and become a double-edged sword (a calm exterior and a stormy interior). Adolescents should be taught to see realistically, speak realistically, and act realistically. Adolescents may look for differences, contradictions, or exceptions in what adults say. They look for excuses to be self-centered and justify their self-centeredness. This stage of their lives is full of danger and risk because they may confuse the concept of logic with pride. Sometimes adolescents question or criticize adults with whom they feel particularly safe. Sometimes they will be overly dramatic or exaggerated in their beliefs and behaviors. As adolescents develop their cognitive skills, some of their behaviors may be confusing to adults who interact with them. Of course, these characteristics are natural and should not be taken personally. Immature adolescents make choices that involve less responsibility. One way to help teens is to help them expand their choices and paths. Because teens who make impulsive decisions are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, parents should help them carefully evaluate their options and consider the consequences. Because teens can be more influenced by what they believe their peers are doing, the social pressure they feel to participate in these activities increases. Adults can help teens understand how emotions influence their thinking and behavior. It is important to understand that teens may be more afraid of the potential negative social consequences of their choices than of the potential health risks. For example, if a teen refuses to drink alcohol at a party, they may be afraid of being excluded from a social group or being ridiculed. Therefore, it is important for adults to consider and understand the context in which teens make decisions about risky behaviors. Even teenagers who are very skilled or talented in some areas may have weaknesses in others. For example, a teenager who has difficulty learning math concepts may be successful in basketball or in learning a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary to examine all aspects of teenage intelligence to understand in which areas teenagers have greater learning skills and talents (i.e., to examine the person's multiple intelligences). In order for a teenager to be intelligent, he or she does not have to be highly talented in all areas, but rather ways must be found to make each teenager's specific types of talents visible and exploitable. That is, giving teenagers the opportunity to learn in ways that emphasize different types of abilities increases their chances of success. Although parents often feel that they have little influence during their children's teenage years, a sense of competence in teenage boys and girls is directly related to feelings of emotional closeness and acceptance by their parents. Parents need to know how influential they are in their teens' lives. Parents and family counselors can directly reinforce teens' developing competencies by paying attention to them and commenting on them during regular contact. Even passing on feedback can be very important to a teen, especially one who may receive little positive feedback.



**Moral Development of Adolescents**

Moral development refers to the development of a sense of values and ethical behavior. Adolescents' cognitive development, in part, provides the basis for moral reasoning, honesty, and prosocial behaviors such as helping, volunteering, or caring for others. Parents can help adolescents develop morally by modeling altruistic and caring behavior toward others and by helping young people to take the perspective of others in conversations. For example, you can ask adolescents: How would you feel if you were that person? Teachers and parents should encourage adolescents to express their opinions, ask questions, clarify their values, and evaluate their reasoning in a positive environment on issues of fairness and morality, and not be afraid of criticism and discussion. This environment should reinforce the concept that racism, sexism, ageism, and prejudice against people with disabilities are destructive to the individual and society. Volunteering in the community is an important positive way for teens to contribute to their moral development. In addition to helping foster a sense of purpose and meaning and increasing moral growth, it has positive long-term outcomes. Adults can help teens understand the value of volunteering and guide them toward worthwhile volunteer experiences.

**Emotional Development of Adolescents**

Emotional development during adolescence involves developing a real and stable sense of identity, relating to others, and learning to cope with stress and manage emotions. Of course, these processes can be lifelong challenges for most people. Identity refers to more than just how adolescents see themselves now. It means expressing who people may become and who they would like to become. It could be argued that identity formation neither begins nor ends in adolescence, but developing a sense of identity has traditionally been seen as a central task of adolescence. That is, adolescence is the first stage of life in which individuals have the cognitive capacity to consciously identify who they are and what makes them unique. Identity can be divided into:

- Self-concept identity: The set of beliefs an individual has about themselves. This includes beliefs about their characteristics (e.g., tall, intelligent), roles and goals (e.g., what job they want to have in the future), interests, values, and beliefs (e.g., religious, political).
- Self-esteem identity: Includes an individual's evaluation of how they feel about their self-concept.

General self-esteem refers to how much we like or approve of ourselves as a whole. Specific self-esteem refers to how much we feel about specific parts of ourselves (e.g., how we look as an athlete or student, etc). Self-esteem develops uniquely for each adolescent, and different paths to self-esteem are possible during adolescence. Self-esteem may therefore remain stable or steadily improve or deteriorate during adolescence. The opinions of others, especially parents and peers, reflect evaluations of the individual that some adolescents may incorporate as part of their identity and feelings about themselves. The process by which an adolescent begins to acquire a true sense of identity also involves experimenting with different ways of looking, sounding, and behaving. Each adolescent approaches these tasks in his or her own unique way. Thus, as one adolescent explores more in one area (e.g., music), another explores more in another (e.g., adopting a particular style or appearance). Adolescents who do not experiment in any area may sometimes appear more stable, but in fact may experience more problems than

adolescents who flit from one interest to another. You can engage your teen with non-threatening questions. That is, by choosing the right question at the right time, you can help your teen define their identity. Questions like:

- Who do you admire?
- What do you admire about that person?
- What do you like to do in your free time?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your goals for the future?
- What have you done in your life that you are proud of?

You should listen to your teen's answers without judgment. This will make your teen realize that you value their opinions and, as a result, they will trust you more. You should ask questions that require more than a yes or no. This will help your teen think through ideas and options. Avoid questions that start with why, because the word why will put your teen on the defensive.

You should modify your questions to get to what the teen was thinking, not because of something the teen said or did. For example, instead of asking, "Why did you say that?" say instead: "You seemed to be really trying to get across a point when you did that. Can you tell me more about what you meant"? Attune to the teen's emotional state, unless it's hostile. If the teen seems anxious or sad, let your answers reflect their mood. Reflecting someone's mood helps the person feel understood. Model logical decision-making strategies and discuss how you arrived at a decision. For example, explain how you defined the problem, generated options, anticipated positive and negative consequences, made the decision, and evaluated the outcome. Remember that teenagers have a relatively short attention span, so keep your words brief. Choose a topic that is relevant to teens. Discuss moral and social issues that are being discussed in the news. Encourage the teen to think out loud about the issues. Without challenging their perspective, think out loud about how others might differ in their views on the topic and what might influence these differences. If there is a gap between the ideals of a teenager and what he is, then it causes low self-esteem in him. The following characteristics can be related to low self-esteem in teenagers:

- Feeling depressed
- Lacking energy
- Disliking one's appearance and rejecting compliments
- Feeling insecure or inadequate most of the time
- Having unrealistic expectations of oneself
- Having serious doubts about the future
- Being excessively shy and rarely expressing one's own point of view
- Conforming to what others want and assuming a submissive stance in most situations.

Because persistent low self-esteem is associated with negative outcomes such as depression, eating disorders, delinquency, and other adjustment problems, parents and counselors should identify and help teens who exhibit these traits. The biggest help a teen can give to boost their self-esteem is to identify specific areas that are important to them. For example, a teen with low self-esteem may be interested in learning to play the guitar. Encouraging the teen to explore that interest and helping them find resources that might lead to guitar lessons can lead to significant gains in self-esteem. Professionals can help teens build self-esteem by helping them face the problem rather than avoid it. For example, they should use their skills and



knowledge to determine whether a teen is in a difficult situation and needs more than just coaching and support to manage a particular situation. Identity development and moral growth occur within the context of relationships with others. Therefore, all adolescents must begin to master the emotional skills necessary to manage stress and to be sensitive and effective in their relationships with others in order to achieve self-awareness. Adolescents who lack communication skills are at greater risk of problems than their peers (Table 4-1).

Factors Affecting Emotional Development	Description
Recognizing and managing emotions	In order to accurately express their feelings, teens need to learn to pay conscious attention to them. Without this self-awareness, they may simply say that they feel good, bad, or worried. When teens can verbalize their feelings and identify the source of their feelings, they can then find options for resolving their problems. If feelings become too distressing and their source is unclear, they may seek to numb their feelings with alcohol, drugs, overeating, isolation, or depression. Teens who feel angry, if they are not aware of the source, may take it out on others and hurt them or themselves instead of dealing with it constructively.
Creating empathy	Recognizing one’s own feelings sets the stage, but does not guarantee that young people will recognize that others have feelings too and should consider these feelings. Some young people have particular difficulty accurately reading the feelings of others (for example, mistaking neutral comments for hostility). Empathy can be taught in a variety of contexts (such as understanding the emotional consequences of prejudice).
Learning to resolve conflict constructively	Given the unique and different needs and desires that people have, conflict is inevitable. Conflict management tools can be modeled informally by professionals or, as in some schools, actively taught to teens. Conflict resolution programs teach students to define their goals in conflicts, their feelings, and the reasons for what they want and feel, and then ask them to consider the perspectives of others when coming up with options that might resolve the conflicts. Although many of these skills are taught in programs aimed at teens, they can also be taught informally with good results.
Developing a cooperative spirit	Schools reflect the competitive attitudes prevalent in society. However, the importance of teams and the ability to work with others is increasingly emphasized. The puzzle classroom is an educational technique designed to facilitate the development of collaborative skills. The method requires students to rely on each other to learn a subject, using strategies that reduce competition and elevate the status of students who are sometimes overlooked or ridiculed. The name comes from the fact that each student becomes part of a small expert group that is like a piece of an informational puzzle that must be assembled with others to fully understand a subject. This approach has been successful not only in helping teenagers learn how to work together toward a group goal, but also in improving their academic performance. Professionals can become aware of the importance of these skills in their work with young people and can develop strategies to help young people build these skills in their everyday contacts with them.

Table 4-1. Factors affecting emotional development.

Emotional development occurs uniquely for each adolescent, and different patterns emerge for different groups of adolescents. Boys and girls can differ in the challenges they face in their emotional development. Adolescents need adults who can help them deal positively with any prejudice they encounter in their lives, teach them to be proud of their identity, and model positive self-esteem. As girls enter adolescence, their sense of self-esteem declines somewhat, and boys tend to have higher self-esteem than girls. Because of the differences in how boys and girls are socialized in society, they may need different ways to seek help from professionals to promote identity formation and address their specific needs. For example, some teenage girls may need help learning to be more assertive or express anger, and teenage boys may need to be encouraged to have collaborative, rather than competitive, relationships with other men, and helped to understand that having and

expressing feelings is not a bad thing.

Social Development of Adolescents

Adolescent social development should be considered in areas such as peer relationships, family, school, workplace, and community. One of the most obvious changes during adolescence is that the focus of an adolescent's world shifts from the family to the peer group. Of course, this decrease in family contact does not mean that closeness to the family has become less important for the adolescent. Closeness and attachment to the family are the most important factors associated with not smoking, not drinking alcohol, reducing suicide attempts, etc., among adolescents. To develop greater independence from parents, adolescents must lean more towards their peers than in the early stages of development. This new focus on peers is a new, important, and healthy stage in their child's development. Peer groups serve important

functions during adolescence and provide a temporary reference point for a growing sense of identity. Adolescents develop judgment and moral values through identification with peers. Of course, some teenagers may secretly try to find ways to identify with their parents. Another important function of peer groups is to provide adolescents with a source of information about the world outside the family and about themselves. Peer groups also act as powerful reinforcers during adolescence as sources of popularity, status, prestige, and acceptance. Being accepted by peers has important consequences for adjustment, both in adolescence and adulthood. Positive peer relationships during adolescence are associated with positive psychosocial adjustment. Those who are accepted by their peers and have reciprocal friendships have a better self-image and perform better in school during adolescence. On the other hand, social isolation among adolescents who are rejected by their peers is associated with a variety of negative behaviors, such as delinquency. Adults who have had interpersonal problems during adolescence are also at much greater risk for psychosocial problems in adulthood. The nature of adolescents' relationships with peer groups changes during adolescence. During this time, peer group relationships are usually at their most intense, with conformity and concerns about acceptance at their peak. Expectations and anxiety about how their peers will view them can be overwhelming for adolescents. A strong desire to belong to a particular group can be overwhelming for adolescents, and this can be a challenge for them. Teens need adults who can help them resist peer pressure and find alternative groups that are interesting enough to join if the group the teen is seeking to join is undesirable (or even dangerous). Every teen is different in the number of friends they have and how they spend time with their peers. Introverted teens have fewer but closer friendships. Boys and girls also differ in the types of activities they engage in with their friends. In general, boys tend to engage in more hands-on activities, while girls spend more time talking to each other. However, both girls and boys value the same qualities in a friend (such as loyalty, openness, and trustworthiness). Having a friend requires that one has the social skills necessary to make and keep that friend. For most teens, the basics of these skills are in place, and peer groups and friendships allow them to further develop these skills. However, for a small group of teens, this is not the case. These teens may be ostracized by their peers, which can have serious negative effects such as delinquency, substance abuse, dropping out of school, and aggression. For teens who lack social skills, adults who informally mentor them in appropriate skill areas can be a lifesaver. Discussing how to initiate conversations with peers, give genuine praise, be a good listener, share private information appropriately, and maintain self-confidence can be very effective in increasing social skills. However, young people who lack social skills but do not exhibit behavioral problems need just as much help as young people who behave in antisocial ways, such as fighting or having problems at school. They may not make as much of a splash in society as these young people, but they are still at risk for long-term problems if their problems are not addressed during adolescence. Whether divorce has a negative impact on teenagers depends on a variety of factors, not just the divorce itself. Although teenagers from divorced families tend to have more adjustment problems than teenagers from intact families, most teenagers cope well with their parents' divorce. The factors that seem to have the greatest impact on coping include whether parents can parent together after the divorce and whether the financial difficulties that often follow

divorce and lead to other stressors, such as having to move, can be minimized. Parents often ask experts how they should change their parenting practices as their children get older. Parents who are close and involved, provide firm guidelines and limits, have developmentally appropriate expectations, and encourage the teenager to develop their own beliefs tend to be more effective. These parents typically use reasoning and persuasion, explain rules, discuss issues, and listen respectfully. Adolescents who grow up in families with this parenting style are more successful in school, have lower rates of depression and anxiety, score higher on measures of self-confidence and self-esteem, and are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior and substance abuse. However, the level of parental supervision and monitoring necessary to promote healthy adolescent development can vary depending on the characteristics of the adolescent's peers and neighborhood environments. For example, setting stricter limits may actually be desirable for adolescents who live in communities with low levels of adult supervision, high levels of risk, and higher levels of problematic behavior among peers, such as some high-crime and inner-city neighborhoods. During adolescence, conflict between parents and adolescents increases, especially between adolescent girls and their mothers, and this conflict is a necessary part of gaining independence from parents while learning new ways to maintain relationships with them. Girls struggle to find new ways to connect with their mothers and may even appear clumsy and withdrawn in their search for new ways to connect. Understandably, mothers may withdraw, starting a cycle of mutual distancing that is sometimes difficult to break. Parents need to understand that their child's clumsiness is not permanent and that teens need their help to shape a new way of communicating that is satisfactory to everyone. Parent-teen conflict usually peaks with younger children. There are two types of conflict that typically occur: spontaneous conflict over everyday issues, such as what the teen is allowed to buy or wear or whether or not they have done their homework, and conflict over important issues, such as academic performance. Spontaneous conflict that occurs on a daily basis is more distressing to parents than to teens. Parents often attach more meaning to conflict-filled interactions, interpreting them as a rejection of their own values or as an indicator of their own failures as parents. On the other hand, teens may view the interaction as much less important (just another way to show off their parenting style or simply a way to vent their emotions). Professionals can help parents understand that minor conflicts or arguments are normal and that these exchanges do not mean that they are not being skilled or effective parents. For most adolescents, school is a prominent part of their lives. They connect with their peers and develop relationships with them. For some adolescents, school is also a source of security and stability. Some of the same characteristics that characterize successful adolescent families (such as a strong sense of attachment, belonging, and a sense of being cared for) also characterize adolescents' positive relationships with their teachers and schools. Because schools are such a critical environment for adolescents, even for professionals working in other settings, connecting with an at-risk adolescent's school psychologist, counselor, or social worker can be important to establish a caring support system. The transition from elementary to middle or high school can present challenges for both academic performance and mental health. Declining academic performance is common after the transition from middle to high school, a transition that can be very disruptive for some adolescents. For some, this

marks the beginning of the process of disengagement from school. Although the transition to high school is not as dramatic, some students continue to disengage during this phase. Professionals should be aware of the difficulties that adolescents can have in the transition to school and be prepared to provide additional support and guidance during these periods. Having a college degree is crucial for economic success. Of course, college is only one option for teens after high school, and career and technical education are other important choices to consider. Attention should be paid to connecting students to community career education during high school and preparing them for post-high school career education. Otherwise, they are likely to be drawn to careers that initially seem high-paying given the youth's limited experience. While the ease of access to these careers can make them very attractive, in the long run, they are unlikely to provide the resources needed to live independently as young adults and even support their families. The large number of students and the small number of guidance counselors in many schools virtually guarantee that many students will struggle with career planning. Therefore, regardless of the individual's professional role, it is beneficial to inquire about and encourage teens to pursue higher education and career education. Many teens have part-time jobs during high school. These jobs can help young people learn many important lessons (such as how the business world works, how to get and keep a job, how to manage time and money, and how to set goals and take pride in their achievements). Of course, the number of hours a teen works is crucial in determining whether these positive benefits are outweighed by the negative ones. Teens who work 20 or more hours a week during the school year are at higher risk for a variety of negative outcomes, including work-related injuries, lower academic achievement, substance abuse, and insufficient sleep. These teens are more emotionally distressed, get poorer grades, are more likely to smoke, and are more likely to engage in other risky behaviors, such as alcohol and drug use. Adults who work with teenagers should warn them to reduce their work hours to less than 20 hours per week during the school year, if possible, knowing that for some teenagers, working is an economic necessity. The characteristics of the community in which an adolescent lives will have a profound impact on his or her development. Some communities are rich in resources that provide adolescents with support and opportunities, while others are lacking. Community characteristics such as socioeconomic status and neighborhood stability (i.e., the degree to which individuals tend to remain in that community or location over a period of time) will significantly influence adolescent development. Grassroots efforts to strengthen support networks for parents and children in fragile and low-socioeconomic communities are important. However, without other changes, these measures are unlikely to make much difference. Employment opportunities for youth, affordable and accessible health care, community policing, housing rehabilitation, and other resources that provide stability and security are also needed. Professionals who participate in their communities as board members of community organizations or school boards and other public policy agencies should know which programs have been evaluated and found to be effective in promoting healthy adolescent development. Media is an important part of adolescent society, and adolescents will be exposed to some form of media for a certain amount of time each day. Although media will have an increasing impact on adolescent development, the ultimate impact will depend on how well it takes advantage of the positive opportunities and

minimizes the negative ones. For example, on the one hand, television and movies can have negative effects due to their depiction of violence and unhealthy sexuality, and the lack of positive role models. On the other hand, they can also serve as a model for education and provide adolescents with valuable information on issues such as how to deal with sexual abuse, substance abuse, nutrition, violence prevention, and mental health concerns.

### Social Behavior of Adolescents

All the ways in which adolescents develop (cognitively, physically, socially, and emotionally) prepare them to experiment with new behaviors as they transition from childhood to adulthood.

This experimentation, in turn, helps them fine-tune their development in these other areas. Risk-taking in adolescence is an important way in which adolescents form their identities, test out new decision-making skills, and develop realistic assessments of themselves, others, and the world. Such exploratory behaviors are normal during adolescence, and adolescents need space to experiment and experience the outcomes of their decision-making in different situations. However, young people sometimes overestimate their own capacities to handle new situations, and these behaviors can pose real threats to their health. To gain peer approval or avoid peer rejection, adolescents sometimes take risks that even they themselves consider too risky. While it is important to focus on the positive aspects of adolescence, awareness of adolescent health-risk behaviors is also vital for those who wish to help prevent and correct these behaviors. There are many reasons why adolescents engage in risky behavior. They may need excitement, fun, and intense emotions, engage in risky group behavior to fit into a certain peer group, and engage in risky behavior to emulate their parents and other adults. Risk-taking is natural during adolescence, and the key is to provide guidance in decision-making and encourage the teen to direct the positive, developmental aspects of this energy toward less risky, more productive activities. Initially, adults should be comfortable talking to teens about making decisions in these relatively sensitive areas (falling in love, drugs, alcohol, and other safety concerns). The goal is to help the teen weigh the risks and benefits of a particular situation, consider their strengths and weaknesses that may influence the decision, and then make the best possible decision. This requires awareness of the risks of a particular behavior and the ability to listen and respond to the teen without bias. The fact that a teen is discussing these issues with an adult is a positive sign. Over time, most teens gradually learn to assess risks realistically and modify their behavior accordingly. Next, adults should be attuned to positive paths that young people might take (volunteering at a local youth center, starting a sport, participating in a school play, learning to play a musical instrument, etc). Of course, risk-taking doesn't have to be dramatic. Going beyond one's previous capacities is risk-taking, and it can satisfy many teens' need for risk-taking. So they should be encouraged to do so (a teen who is talented in the arts may need encouragement to try a new medium; a shy teen who is good at languages may need encouragement to use her skills in the community). It takes time to discover a teen's talents or interests and then challenge that teen to channel her energies toward taking risks in positive ways. Risky behavior in some adolescents may threaten their health in the short and long term. Adolescents who are at greater risk for serious negative outcomes tend to engage in multiple problematic behaviors at an early age, such as drug use and unprotected sex, and also have poor school performance and low self-



esteem. Dropping out of school can be one of the most detrimental actions that teenagers can take, with potentially disastrous effects on their economic future. For most teenagers who engage in aggressive behavior, their behavior reflects a gap between their biological and social maturity. Schools that give students a sense of shared responsibility and belonging, have high expectations for participation, and provide high levels of individual support for students. That is, they increase resilience. A positive, principled parenting style that sets clear limits and respects adolescents’ growing autonomy is also associated with resilience in adolescents. Resilience is a function of developmental experiences that are rooted in the context of society. Whether a society is able to provide the relationships, resources, and commitment necessary to provide the kinds of supports and developmental experiences that foster resilient adolescents depends on many factors, but the key is whether adolescents’ needs are prioritized.

Chapter 5: Emotional Resilience and Self-Reliance  
Health and Success for Yourself and Your Family

Emotional self-confidence is the desired outcome of growth and development that enables a person to achieve success, get along with people, find satisfaction in life, and generally enjoy great health and happiness. This means the ability to manage one’s emotions to limit negative events and fully enjoy positive ones. Healthy emotional development involves feeling free to experience healthy emotions without undue distress and knowing that you have a choice about what you feel or how strongly you feel them. This is usually the result of a healthy combination of nature and nurture. Under optimal conditions, it develops gradually over several ages and stages. Because it involves a strong combination of learning and maturation, this form of development is often highly vulnerable to risk factors, which may be both what one inherits and what one finds and experiences (or fails to find or experience) in one’s environment. Each person’s environment includes other people and experiences with the natural world.

Therefore, emotional self-efficacy develops in the context of human relationships and other personal and non-relational experiences. For this reason, it is necessary to define two parts of emotional self-efficacy (personal characteristics and emotional characteristics):

- A description of the characteristics and qualities of an individual that

are shown in his mental and emotional response to environmental conditions (response to difficulty, honesty, reaction to stress, emotional intelligence, etc.).

- A description of the emotional characteristics that are shown in relationships with other people (confidence, anxiety, empathy, etc.).

In many cases, the role that emotions play in our lives is confusing. Sometimes they add color to the paintings of our lives. Sometimes they are troublesome. Often, emotions affect us when we don’t want them to and frustrate us when we do. Because they can seem a bit confusing, most of us develop strategies to cope with them, and these strategies include an interesting variety. For example, many people try to manage anxiety by creating specific, rigid routines and following them daily. Others panic when they are anxious and try to keep themselves busy and engaged until the emotions subside. People who feel lost and hopeless when they are depressed call people and talk to them or do something fun. Others think of death simply to get rid of the problem. Young lovers are excited when the first feelings of love bloom, but they may feel afraid and worry that the initial feelings will fade. When they don't feel the way they want, they set up routines to maintain or restore their feelings. Emotional development is essential in the lives of adolescents, and of course, many of the problems that affect them are related to emotions. That is, there are either too many wrong emotions or not enough right emotions. Depression affects adolescents, weakens them, and prevents them from creating a healthy life for themselves. Growth and maturation mean that something changes over time, and these changes can move towards a positive end or they can be delayed. The stages of emotional development and maturation are as follows:

- Learning more about them and how they affect a person
- How a person is responsible for them and uses them wisely
- How to express positive emotions with greater variety and utility
- How to understand negative emotions and regulate their experience, and how to express them
- How to create more mental capacity for positive emotions so that their experience is more intense, longer, and more useful.

These steps will foster emotional resilience and emotional self-reliance (Table 1-5).

Characteristics of Emotions	Descriptions
Positive and negative emotions are hereditary	Some positive and negative emotions (such as happiness, sadness, fear, anxiety, anger, anticipation, surprise, disgust, and trust) are inherited.
Emotions Have Partners	Emotions are organized in pairs (combined or opposite), meaning that the expression of one implies the availability of the other (such as happiness and sadness, fear and anger, anticipation and surprise, disgust and trust, love and anxiety). That is, adolescents will have both positive and negative emotions. Learning how to recognize, understand, communicate, and guide both will be helpful to parents and help them understand how children’s emotions can sometimes change rapidly.
Emotions have three basic elements	Emotional state: This is the body's reaction and response (heart rate, breathing, etc.) to emotions. People can create cycles of bodily responses and emotional experiences to perpetuate depression, anxiety, and other positive emotions. Changing the physical response changes the feeling. Maintaining good health habits goes hand in hand with a healthy emotional life. Feelings and emotions: This is a person's interpretation of their positive and negative feelings. (For

	<p>example, saying things like: I feel happy, I'm very sad, I love you). How people perceive their feelings is related to their identity and self-concept. If they have positive emotions most of the time, they are likely to think of themselves as a happy and confident person.</p> <p>Emotional maps: Displays are the way a person expresses or displays emotions in their facial expressions, gestures, and movements. Some displays are universal and everyone shows them the same way (smiling when happy), some are cultural (expressing negative emotions in public versus only in private), and some are specific to the individual or family. Displays are parts of emotions that need to be encouraged and regulated to build self- confidence. The more people display positive emotions, the happier they are and generally achieve greater success, personal fulfillment, and satisfaction in their relationships with others. The better people can understand and regulate negative emotions, the more likely they are to avoid problems and live successful lives.</p>
The purpose of emotions	<p>Emotions focus a person's attention, motivate them, and give meaning to the person, their natural environment, other people, and their relationships. Understanding how to use their own emotions and how to help adolescents use their emotions can help parents motivate their children, help them focus, and understand their experiences with people and the world around them. The more self-aware adolescents are, the more likely they are to make good decisions.</p>
How emotions Are Caused	<p>Emotional states, experiences, and displays are the result of a person's interpretations or thoughts, choices, and actions, even if they appear to be created by events or people external to the person. Self-reliant people tend to recognize that they are responsible for what they feel and how they express their feelings. This does not mean that they blame or feel guilty for their feelings, but instead they refrain from blaming others, accept their feelings, and learn to guide them to a healthy place.</p>
Separation of emotions	<p>Emotions and their expression become personality traits and the quality of behavior of adolescents. By learning how to promote emotional self-reliance, you are actually influencing the personality and character of adolescents. This can be achieved by helping adolescents understand and communicate about their emotions, by learning to feel responsible for how they express them, by creating positive emotions, and by learning how to regulate how they express negative emotions.</p>

Table 5-1. Characteristics of Emotions.

Many highly valued emotions (such as loving and being loved, happiness, hope, optimism, self-confidence, peace, security, empathy, compassion, gratitude, tolerance, and acceptance of others, etc.) will only exist in a person's life if they are learned.

Emotional Self-Reliance

Each culture has its own definition of emotional self-reliance. The set of characteristics that lead to human success, along with each person's observations and experiences, will be expressed as a complete definition of emotional self-reliance. These characteristics can be interpreted as follows:

- **Knowing How to Live Successfully:** Most people face decisions in life that are part of a basic plan or method for living successfully. These decisions also include how to create and follow success strategies that guide how to prepare for workplace competence, how to succeed financially, how to create social success, how to build positive relationships with others, how to endure adverse circumstances, how to resolve family problems, how to decide on and live by moral values, how to be a good neighbor, and how to be a positive and contributing member of society.
- **Experiencing More Positive Emotions than Negative Emotions:** Emotions come in both positive (such as love, joy, peace, and

- happiness) and negative (such as anxiety, anger, revenge, and resentment) forms. Emotional self-efficacy exists when individuals feel or experience more positive emotions than negative emotions, learn how to generate positive emotions for themselves, and gradually improve their abilities to express them clearly and accurately to others.
- **Developing a Sense of Self-Control Over Feelings and Thoughts:** When responding to some environmental pressure or reacting to another person's actions, emotional self-reliance exists when at least a degree of autonomy (a sense of free choice) exists before the individual reacts or responds to another person's behavior or perception. For example, when faced with disappointment, stress, or frustration, people with emotional self-reliance recognize that they can choose how to think, feel, and respond positively to the situation, rather than feeling reactive and completely controlled by the situation or another person.
- **Developing Positive Emotions and Regulating Negative Emotions During Distress:** Emotional self-reliance is demonstrated by the ability to overcome difficulties and persevere during periods of emotional distress by regulating negative emotions and developing optimism, identifying learning options, and developing a hopeful,

long-term perspective on any situation (rather than feeling helpless and trapped in the current situation).

- **Demonstrating Social Confidence and Adaptability:** Emotional self-reliance is demonstrated as social confidence, which means being comfortable with a variety of social situations. It is also demonstrated by interpersonal competence, which promotes success in relationships with other people. It is also evident in the ability to learn and successfully adapt emotional displays and language for several different social situations.
- **Resilience:** Emotional self-reliance is demonstrated by resilience (returning to the original state) in the face of failure, loss, or tragedy.
- **Initiating, Persevering, and Completing Work:** Emotional self-reliance is present when individuals demonstrate the ability to initiate work, persevere in work, and complete the tasks that are part of the job.
- **Demonstrating Forgiveness, Tolerance, Honesty, Compassion, and Empathy:** The results of successful development are expressed in several forms of social behavior and ethical conduct, such as honesty and integrity. Successful development is also demonstrated when individuals can demonstrate forgiveness, sacrifice, service, love, tolerance without prejudice, acceptance of others, empathy, and compassion.
- **Having a Large Network of Friends and Acquaintances and a Sense of Belonging:** Emotionally mature individuals typically develop and maintain a variety of acquaintances and friendships. Although they may sometimes prefer to be alone, they usually enjoy and value meeting people, talking to people, and learning from people. This provides a sense of belonging, security, and safety, and also leads to the ability to form and maintain close emotional relationships.
- **Feeling and Expressing Gratitude Frequently:** Self-reliant people appreciate the contributions of others and the kindnesses and blessings they have received. When they have and express these feelings, the brain's neurotransmitters (dopamine) are produced, which elevates mood and creates greater happiness and satisfaction.
- **Making and Keeping Promises:** Self-reliant people have a strong sense of honor when it comes to making and keeping promises. They are less impulsive about decisions, although they can be impulsive, but once they make a promise, they organize their lives to follow through or honor it.
- **Delaying Gratification:** Self-reliant people (emotionally) do not give up what they want most for what they want right now. They can delay gratification in order to achieve their goals (i.e., they prefer long-term, meaningful goals to short-term, unproductive goals). They can limit impulsivity to achieve what is better for themselves and others than making an impulsive choice.

### Creating Emotional Connections and Comfort for Children by Families

Families can use the following factors to create and maintain healthy emotional connections and communication:

- Learning about emotions and the role of emotions in family life (when family members feel and understand their own and others' emotions, they communicate better, which leads to more successful

relationships)

- Accurately assessing children's emotional expressions and using them when communicating with them
- Emotionally supporting children when expressing expectations for their performance
- Creating a sense of comfort when children are distressed
- Seeking and understanding children's feelings when making decisions about them
- Emphasizing children's ability to adapt to and express their emotions (people who are better at successfully adapting to different types of social situations tend to be more confident and successful in their relationships)
- Empathizing with children and being aware of children's emotions (helping children find labels that match their feelings)
- Teaching children family stories and helping them be resilient (ensuring that all family members are aware of their family stories (as a family learning experience) will promote children's emotional well-being).
- Frequent teaching and communication about positive and negative emotions, as well as talking about emotions and explaining when and how to show certain emotions and when not to show them
- Teaching emotional standards of family membership (identifying several emotional standards for family members and voluntarily demonstrating membership through honest communication, love, loyalty, cooperation, and kindness
- Expressing anger in moderation, controlling anger expression (to prevent fear and separation of individuals), and communicating effectively through calm conversation
- Creating joint projects and mentoring (working together on family projects can teach cooperation and create a sense of unity and belonging)

In order to implement effective action plans, families must follow the following perspectives:

- They must understand how emotional self-confidence develops and teach its principles.
- They must become familiar with emotional self-confidence and be aware of what it looks like in adulthood, how to promote it, what the signs of its lack are, and what may prevent it.
- They must develop a family plan to promote emotional self-confidence and provide the necessary leadership to strengthen children and prevent potential problems.
- They must differentiate their children as unique individuals (identifying children who have inherited a high level of brain reactivity and children who do not) and develop a plan for each of them.
- They must understand family and child development and prepare children for future success. That is, have a plan to promote development that is tailored to each child and do their best to provide an emotional environment.
- They must create an atmosphere of safety and make sure that children feel loved. That is, they must help each child learn to be an effective



and useful member of the family and ensure that each family member feels loved because the parents express and demonstrate this.

- They should use positive discipline and reduce anger and frustration. That is, they should promote a positive approach to managing children so that they feel empowered and avoid overreacting to what children do or say.
- They should adapt their disciplinary approach to the development of children. That is, as children mature, they should change their family's disciplinary approach from rule-based and consequence-based and place more emphasis on their relationship with their children.
- They should gradually create independent decision-making. That is, accompany their children in a developmental decision-making process. Make the initial decisions for them and then go to the point where they make decisions with them. After that, they can ask them to make their own decisions so that, over time they can achieve intellectual independence.
- They should understand the personal myths and imaginary audiences that young people create about themselves, which are often not based on reality.
- They should teach moral behavior. That is, teach them that moral behavior helps someone and that what is not moral harms someone. Also, instead of ignoring children's bad behavior or thinking that imposing some consequences will be enough, they should make corrections to help the child to their own feelings and the feelings of others. Children can learn to organize their lives to stand up for what is right and resist pressure to do something that harms themselves or others.
- They should teach healthy social skills, belonging, participation, and other social skills. That is, they should help children learn to include others, meet and greet people, compliment them, ask questions, and listen, adapt their emotional behavior appropriately from one situation to another, and express their opinions in social situations.

Chapter 6: Stress

What is Stress?

Stress is a sudden feeling that occurs

When a person is under pressure. It is a completely natural reaction that all humans experience from time to time. This reaction occurs when the body feels threatened and is carried out in two ways: fight or flight. This is not dangerous, and even a certain amount of stress can be very useful and motivating. If stress is too much for a long time, it can be harmful to a person's health. In slang, stress can be expressed as follows:

- I never finish anything before moving on to the next task.
- I always forget where I am, I have several tasks going on at the same time, and I never get anywhere with any of them.
- I always want to take some time for myself, but I never succeed.
- Someone is always asking me to help, and I never have the courage to say no, but I end up feeling very tired and irritable.
- It seems like crises are happening one after another in my life. I have constant headaches and stomach problems. I keep expecting something else to happen because I've reached the end of the line.
- It's really hard for me to relax, and my mind is always racing; I can't stop worrying.

Stress symptoms vary from person to person. Physical symptoms are linked to an ancient survival strategy called the fight-or-flight response. This response releases hormones like cortisol and adrenaline into the body, preparing the person to fight or flee. Of course, the everyday pressures of today's society don't end with these responses. That means you can't run away from or fight against debt, deadlines, or stressful life events. Many people become very concerned when they experience these symptoms, thinking that they may be signs of a serious physical or mental health problem (**Table 6-1**).

Stages of the Impact of Stress	Types of Changes at that Particular Stage
The effect of stress on the body	Muscle tension and aches and pains, Churning stomach, Sweating, Blurred vision, tired eyes, Feeling sick, dizzy and faint, Bowel and bladder problems, Changes in breathing (fast, shallow, sometimes breathless), Tingling hands, Racing heart, Dry mouth, Feelings of tiredness and exhaustion
The impact of stress on emotions	Anger, irritability, agitation, Anxious and full of dread, Unhappy, upset, and tearful, lacking in interest, overwhelmed and frustrated, Guilty and worthless
The impact of stress on behavior	Irritability and irritability, Drinking more than usual, Smoking more than usual, Eating too much or too little, Withdrawing from activities usually enjoyed, Avoiding people, places, and situations, Putting things off, Becoming unreasonable, Making silly mistakes, rushing around and doing too much, not sleeping, biting nails, grinding teeth
The effect of stress on thinking	Worry all the time, have racing thoughts that won't switch off, expect the worst, think negatively about everything, Criticise They and others have poor concentration and memory

Table 6-1. Stages of the Impact of Stress.

What causes stress varies from person to person and throughout our lives. Stress can have many sources. Sometimes it can be one or two major life

events or changes, and sometimes it can be a series of smaller things. In addition to what happens to us and those around us (external stressors such

as bereavement, debt, work stress), our stress levels are also influenced by what happens inside us (internal stressors such as frustration, anger, rushing, avoidance, irritability). Although you can't always control the external stresses in your life, you can break the vicious cycle of more stress by better understanding stress and changing your response to it. Examining the external stresses in your life can help you identify the source of your feelings of stress. Stress can't always be avoided, but learning more about stress can help you identify the causes of stress and reduce its impact. You can start a stress diary and write down:

- What causes stress?
- Where, what, and who causes stress?
- Identify stress triggers
- How you feel, think, and act daily

These are important first steps in making some changes.

Managing Stress in the Body

Since the stress response is largely physical, the human body is one of the first things to be affected. There are many solutions that can be used to manage stress in the body. Controlled breathing, deep muscle relaxation, conscious breathing, and relaxing activities can help reduce tension and quell some of the physical symptoms of stress. Therefore, these steps should be considered:

- **Controlled Breathing:** To begin, you should choose a time of day when you feel most relaxed. You can do this exercise sitting or standing with your eyes open or closed. You should focus on your breathing for a few minutes, breathing in slowly and calmly through your nose and out through your lips. Then place one hand on your

chest and the other on your stomach. So the hand moves first on your stomach and then on your chest. That is, with each breath, the person's lungs fill and empty. Controlled breathing can be used anytime, anywhere to turn off the body's stress response.

- **Deep Muscle Relaxation:** You should start by sitting or lying down in a warm and comfortable place. This relaxation exercise familiarizes the person with the different muscle groups in the body and teaches them to first contract and then relax them. You should not tighten your muscles too much, and it should not be uncomfortable or painful. Each time you relax a group of muscles, you should pay attention to the feeling that arises when you relax. You should not try to relax too much, but just release the tension and allow the muscles to relax as much as possible. Then you can feel the difference between a tight state compared to a relaxed state.
- **Mindful Breathing:** Mindful breathing is a different approach to stress management, and it aims to be calm and non-judgmental, allowing thoughts and feelings to come and go without getting caught up in them. This means focusing only on the present moment, not the past or the future. A lot of stress is related to thoughts and feelings about the past and future, so just being here and now can be very helpful. It's okay if thoughts come to mind, because that's exactly what the mind does. But you don't have to focus on them every moment. You shouldn't judge yourself or analyze them for having them. Then you can start to be mindful in everyday situations, bringing your full focus of attention to whatever you are doing.
- **Relaxing Activities:** These activities include three categories: exercise, entertainment, and self-care (**Table 6-2**).

Types of Relaxing Activities	Description
Exercise	Regular exercise has many benefits for our physical and mental health. It is also very relaxing and a great way to reduce stress and physical tension. Exercise can reduce the body's levels of stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol). It also stimulates the body's production of natural feel-good hormones (serotonin and endorphins). For good health, you should be active for at least 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. Of course, you should find a type of exercise that you enjoy, as this will make it much easier to motivate yourself.
Hobbie	Anything that interests a person, interests them, and relaxes them can help reduce the physical effects of stress on the body (such as photography, painting, singing, baking, etc.). However, not all hobbies and activities are relaxing (such as watching your favorite team lose). Increasing one's awareness by keeping a stress diary can be very helpful in determining which types of activities are best for reducing stress in the body.
Self care	There are many ways to relax and unwind (such as relaxing in a hot bath, getting a massage, drinking a cup of your favorite tea, practicing yoga, eating healthy, watching a favorite movie, seeing friends, laughing, reading a good book, etc.).

Table 6-2. Relaxing Activities.

To manage stressful thoughts, it is important to note that our body and mind are connected. Therefore, controlled breathing, deep relaxation, conscious breathing, and relaxing activities help to calm the stressful mind and the stressful body. To analyze stressful thoughts, it can be stated that:

- Changing stressful thoughts can have a big impact on how a person feels and behaves.  
When stress is excessive, a person's thoughts become a big part of the problem.
- Thoughts can convince a person that they cannot cope with problems,

that they are useless, and that trying to overcome stress is also useless.

- Stressful thoughts cause a person to avoid activities that could be beneficial (such as seeing friends, exercising, and doing fun things).
- A person should aim to be good enough and not compare themselves to others (in an unhelpful way).
- A person should not focus only on their weaknesses and should not ignore their good points (because when a person feels stressed, they forget their strengths and achievements).
- A person should not accept responsibility or blame for something that is not really in their control and should remind themselves that they

can only do their best and that this is out of their control.

- One should not worry about something that may never happen.
- One should not underestimate their ability to cope, even if the worst happens, and should remind themselves of how they have coped with difficult situations in the past and overcome them.
- In order not to always focus on the negative and not feel hopeless, a person should keep a gratitude journal by their bed and write down three things that went well and for which they are grateful every night. This will focus the person's attention on the positive, improve their mood, and reduce stress.
- What goes through a person's mind when they are stressed not only affects their thoughts and feelings, but also has a great impact on their behavior. Therefore, to control stress, they should look at their behavior and see if there is anything they can change to reduce their stress.

Sometimes, ignoring difficult situations or problems is the only way to cope. Of course, this is not helpful in the long run. Behaviors such as not opening letters, not answering the phone, not seeing friends, and not going out can only make things worse. So the person should try to face everything that they are avoiding. It is not necessary to do everything at once, but if they stop avoiding, then it will make the person feel more in control of their daily affairs. You should make a list of every problem that the person may be avoiding (such as debt, problems at home, problems at work, and emotional problems). Of course, the person may be avoiding some good things that could make them feel better because they are feeling so stressed.

As part of the avoidance that occurs when stressed, a person's activity level may often decrease significantly. While we might normally exercise, see friends, go to the movies, etc., when stressed, we may reduce our pleasurable behaviors because we feel we don't have time and are too stressed. Having a plan to increase our activity can help reduce our stress. So we can think specifically about the things that are most valuable to us.

When stressed, our activity level may often increase, and we may rush through things. At this point, we should ask ourselves: Am I always on the move? Do I feel like I'm doing more but getting less and less done? Do I find myself saying yes all the time when it would be much better for me to say no? If so, our overactivity may be increasing our stress. We should try to slow down and rest more. We should gain the strength to say no.

## Chapter 7: Examining the Impact of Anxiety on Life

### Anxiety

Anxiety is a familiar emotion because it is part of the experience of all humans. Its natural function is to alert a person to potential threats and allow them to assess and respond to them in appropriate ways. This state of heightened alertness can also help people perform better and stimulate creative impulses. Anxiety is a phenomenon in modern societies that is increasingly reflected in the visual arts, music, literature, and social media. For some people, anxiety causes inappropriate or disproportionate reactions to perceived threats, leading to persistent and disturbing symptoms associated with anxiety disorders (such as panic, phobias, and obsessive behaviors) that have a debilitating impact on their lives. Today's society lives in an age of anxiety, reflecting a shared mood about the defining aspects of modern life. To understand anxiety disorders and support an anxiety-free life,

a series of educational courses should be included in textbooks, and related medical services should be established at the community level. Being anxious is an important part of what it means to be human. That is, we worry about the aspects of our lives that matter most to us (such as our health, our ability to feed and clothe ourselves and our families, and our ability to relate to and be valued by others). Anxiety helps us get out of bed in the morning and pushes us out of our comfort zone. However, we must do everything we can to avoid anxiety because if we do not control our anxious thoughts, we will feel like a failure. For some, these thoughts can become habitual and lead to uncomfortable or even distressing physical symptoms. This means that patterns can develop that can have a limiting effect on our lives. Anxiety can also be exhilarating. Putting yourself in situations that trigger anxiety can feel like a terrible ordeal at the time, but coming out on the other side can bring an incredible sense of accomplishment. Life's most important moments don't come without sleepless nights. Becoming a parent, getting married, passing exams, and learning to drive all bring great rewards, but they're unlikely to come without a little bit of trepidation. Anxiety is an emotional state that can work both for and against an individual. It's something that all humans have in common. But when there's a collective difference, how we perceive these feelings and how we respond to them will differ. People's circumstances, upbringing, and personalities influence how we perceive emotions and anxiety (like when an exciting car ride is enjoyable for one person and terrifying for another). Feeling anxious is not a sign of failure, and there are times when it is important to seek help from those around you or a professional. In addition to understanding anxiety, there are many things you can do to take steps to reduce its impact and to experience the full range of your emotions without fear of them overwhelming you. Everyone feels anxious at some point in their life (such as preparing for a job interview, meeting their partner's family for the first time, or the prospect of becoming a parent). A person may associate anxiety with changes in their mental state (experienced as worry or apprehension) and physical symptoms such as increased heart rate and adrenaline, but they also understand that it only affects them temporarily until the source of their anxiety is removed or they learn to cope with it. Thus, anxiety is one of a wide range of emotions that serve the positive function of alerting a person to things they may need to worry about. These emotions help them assess potential threats and respond to them in an appropriate manner by speeding up their reactions or focusing their attention. Fear is a psychological, physiological, and behavioral state, and like anxiety, it is a familiar emotion. Fear increases arousal, anticipation, and neurobiological activity in the body, creating specific behavioral patterns designed to help a person cope with an unfavorable or unexpected situation. Given that anxiety and fear are often used interchangeably; how can the two be distinguished? Fear is the fear of something specific and definite, and anxiety is the anxiety that does not arise from anything specific and is indefinite. Fear is directed at something distinct in the world, and anxiety is the anxiety that arises from being in the world in the literal sense. Anxiety is experienced in the face of something completely indefinite. Fear has a specific, immediate context that triggers the classic fight-or-flight response. That is, the automatic fear response occurs faster than conscious thought, releasing a surge of adrenaline that can quickly subside once the perceived or real threat is removed. Anxiety, in contrast, is a prolonged, chronic feeling of worry, tension, or terror whose sources may be unclear. It can be a vague,



unpleasant feeling experienced in anticipation of an unknown misfortune. The symptoms of fear and anxiety diverge and converge to varying degrees. The difference between fear and anxiety can be expressed as follows: A person's sudden change in mood and heart rate when they see an intruder with a knife behind them (fear) versus nausea, dizziness, and anxiety when making a difficult phone call (anxiety). Anxiety disorders such as panic, phobias, and obsessive-compulsive behaviors may be triggered by traumatic memories, irrational aversions to specific objects, proximity to specific physical situations or places, or persistent worry that something bad will happen in the future. A defining characteristic of anxiety disorders is that psychological symptoms, such as irritability, difficulty concentrating, and depression, are intrusive and persistent. Many people also experience physical symptoms such as heart palpitations, sweating, tension and pain, heavy and rapid breathing, dizziness, fainting, indigestion, stomach pain, nausea, and even a feeling of impending doom. The lives of people with the most severe forms of anxiety can be completely dominated by their illness, meaning they have difficulty relaxing or achieving regular sleep patterns, and they become stuck in circular thought patterns that interfere with their ability to maintain their preferred lifestyle, hold down a job, or maintain personal relationships. Anxiety can be described as a state of internal tension that leads people to flee from it, which requires them to use a defense mechanism in response. It is also possible that nervous anxiety caused by unconscious fear may lead to inappropriate behavior, one of the results of which will be a person's conscience, which will exacerbate anxiety. A person should try to strengthen their ability to find ways to deal with anxiety by using psychological experts. Sometimes, when falling from a height or sustaining an injury, the person himself may feel an irrational urge to commit that incident in his mind and will. This feeling is like a mental dizziness that is simultaneously caused by the person's will and sudden events. Since everyone may naturally have a tendency to be nervous and pay close attention to their surroundings, it can be said that everyone's greatest strength may also be their greatest weakness.

### The Most Common Anxiety Disorders

Anxiety often involves a set of interconnected symptoms and disorders, characterized by a confusing cycle between anxiety triggers and the responses they produce. One type of anxiety that is characterized by a fear of fainting or becoming ill in crowds and public places is a combination of agoraphobia (fear of being away from home) and nausea. This combination may not have a life-threatening impact on its own, but the effects of their interaction can be devastating. This can be seen most clearly in people who have both depression and anxiety, which results in a downward spiral that exacerbates anxiety. Panic is an exaggeration of the body's natural response to fear, stress, or excitement. Panic attacks are periods of intense fear in which symptoms develop suddenly and rapidly reach a peak. Panic attacks are a type of emotional short circuit in which the limbic system (a brain structure that plays a central role in processing emotions, behavior, and long-term memory) suddenly takes over, leading to overwhelming feelings, which may include a racing heart, feeling faint, sweating, trembling limbs, nausea, chest pain, shortness of breath, and a feeling of losing control. Adrenaline overwhelms the cognitive functions that help the brain assess the true nature of the threat to the body. These effects can be so severe that people experiencing panic attacks feel like they are dying. A phobia is an intense

and irrational fear of a specific object or situation, such that the sufferer goes to great lengths to avoid it. Social phobia can include a fear of being judged, scrutinized, or humiliated. This phobia can manifest itself as a fear of doing certain things in front of others, such as speaking in public. Although agoraphobia is often associated with a fear of open spaces, its main feature is intense anxiety that triggers a panic reaction in situations from which escape is considered difficult or embarrassing, or where help may not be readily available. In fact, such crises often occur in confined spaces. Agoraphobia can have a significantly limiting effect on the lifestyle of people with the condition, as they seek to avoid situations that make them anxious. For example, they only use locations that have known exit routes or stay close to exits.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or syndrome is a psychological reaction to a highly stressful event outside the realm of everyday experience (such as military combat, physical violence, or a natural disaster), and symptoms include depression, anxiety, flashbacks, recurrent nightmares, and avoidance of situations that might trigger memories of the event.

Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is characterized by unwanted, intrusive, persistent, or repetitive thoughts, feelings, ideas, sensations (obsessions), or behaviors that cause the sufferer to feel compelled to do something (compulsions) to get rid of the obsessive thoughts. This provides only temporary relief, and not performing the obsessive-compulsive ritual can cause great anxiety. A person's level of OCD can range from mild to severe, but if severe and untreated, it can destroy a person's capacity to function adequately at work, school, or even have a comfortable life at home.

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is the most commonly diagnosed anxiety disorder and usually affects young adults. It also affects women more than men. While it is normal to feel anxious, people with GAD have difficulty controlling it, to the point that it affects their daily lives. The disorder causes sufferers to feel anxious about a wide range of situations and issues, rather than a specific event. Unlike a phobia, which focuses on a specific object or situation, generalized anxiety is widespread and permeates the sufferer's daily life. Although GAD is less severe than a panic attack, its duration and mental and physical symptoms, such as irritability, poor concentration, and the effects on sleep patterns, mean that people with the disorder often have trouble living the life they want. The true impact of anxiety can be hidden when symptoms of other physical problems are more obvious or treatable. Anxiety disorders are common among cardiovascular patients, and panic attacks are up to 10 times more common in people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease than in the general population. People with GAD are at increased risk for coronary heart disease, and anxiety is also associated with increased incidence of gastrointestinal problems, arthritis, migraines, allergies, and thyroid disease. People with anxiety disorders are four times more likely to develop high blood pressure. This is because there is a direct relationship between anxiety and decreased white blood cell function, which can weaken the immune system. There is also a link between stress and the onset of Alzheimer's disease. Anxiety is also associated with unhealthy lifestyle choices such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and a poor diet.

### Anxiety in Its Own Words

Hi... I'm anxious. My existence is like being in a war and keeping your head

above the trenches every day. Sometimes I'm like preparing for a job interview and forcing the person to perform better than they really should. Most of the time, I keep the person from thinking about things that distract them from letting go or having fun. That is, I always have something in the back of their mind that says you have to solve this or that. I'm like having generalized anxiety disorder. I make the person feel like they're being attacked in their mind, and then they feel it physically. I force the person to hold their breath and take shallow breaths. Their heart starts to beat faster and go up and down. I force them to always feel like there is something that needs to be explored a little deeper. I force them to avoid crowds and crowded environments because of the stress of being away from home. Like a runner getting ready to start a race, I force them to be ready for a change or a new event at any moment. I disrupt his happy, relaxed mood and replace positivity with negative thoughts that he's not good enough. His family says, "You have to learn to say no," but I force him to do it because if he says no, people will think badly of him. If he wants to study or exercise, I remind him that he has to do a lot of work beforehand to make the process of studying or exercising acceptable. I create imaginary obstacles for him so that he can't start something and can't finish it properly.

### Managing Anxiety

A person cannot simply decide to stop being anxious. That is, while anxiety can be a debilitating condition, it is not a disease. Self-help strategies are less likely to be effective for more severe disorders, although most are highly treatable and full recovery is an achievable goal. Medications can improve the worst symptoms and aid in the recovery process, but are less useful in helping people manage acute threats in the long term. Persistent symptoms, vulnerability to anxiety, and stress-related symptom exacerbations and anxiety contribute to the risk of disease exacerbation. Participating in physical activity and exercise also reduces depression, anxiety, psychological distress, and emotional disorders. Physical exercise can reduce anxiety and has short- and long-term beneficial effects on mental health.

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

When a person is anxious, the way they view and evaluate themselves can become negative. Cognitive behavioral therapy helps people understand the connection between negative thoughts and mood and how changing their behavior can help them manage anxiety and feel in control. It is the most effective non-drug treatment for reducing symptoms of almost all mental health problems, especially anxiety and depression, for people who are concerned about their health, and it leads to a more overall improvement in the quality of life of people with anxiety. One of the characteristics of cognitive behavioral therapy is that it is a short-term treatment and can be done by primary care therapists or as a self-help program. Mindfulness is a type of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) that focuses on changing the relationship between the anxious person and their thoughts, rather than changing the thoughts themselves. Using meditation and similar techniques, it can help people break out of automatic states that lead to negative ways of thinking and responding. Cognitive behavioral therapy works by addressing the physical symptoms experienced when anxious, but instead of avoiding or withdrawing from these feelings, the person stays in the present moment and experiences them fully, allowing them to view their reactions in a different way. This approach has a significant positive impact on the mood and symptoms of people with anxiety disorders.

### Guided Self-Help

Because of its low cost, adaptability to various forms of digital and social media, and its acceptance, guided self-help has become an increasingly popular way to provide treatment to people who may not otherwise seek treatment for reasons related to their anxiety or due to time pressures from commitments such as caregiving. Most guided self-help is based on cognitive behavioral approaches and aims to help the person with anxiety reach a level of recovery where they can understand the nature of their anxiety and what is happening to them physiologically. They are then helped to develop the skills needed to cope with it by challenging unhelpful thinking, realistically assessing their physical symptoms, and managing gradual exposure to the source of their anxiety. The main advantage of this type of treatment approach is the level of adherence that can be achieved.

### Chapter 8: Increasing Self-Confidence in those Around you

#### Shyness and Social Phobia

Everyone may feel insecure in social situations at times. That is, a certain level of anxiety is normal. Anxiety becomes a problem when it is persistent and begins to affect a person's daily life. This condition is sometimes called shyness or social phobia. It is important to understand the difference between being shy and experiencing social anxiety. Shyness is common and is characterized by short, intermittent periods of discomfort and low self-confidence in certain social situations (such as meeting new people). People who experience shyness may be reluctant to participate in some social situations; however, they can overcome their fear and nervousness about social participation and feel at ease once they get to know people. However, social anxiety is a persistent and excessive fear of being negatively judged by others in most social situations. People who suffer from social phobia often experience significant distress before, during, and after social interactions that significantly impair their ability to function in daily life. Shyness and social phobia share similar characteristics (uncomfortableness in social situations, shyness in social situations, intense fear, and avoidance of social situations). All humans experience anxiety. Anxiety is a physical response to fear that has kept us safe throughout our evolution. These physical feelings can range from nervousness to extreme terror. When a person is threatened (physically or psychologically), they experience the fight/flight/freeze response, which is when adrenaline is released into their body, causing a series of physiological changes. Anxiety tells a person that something dangerous or unpleasant is happening that they need to pay attention to. Anxiety can also help improve performance. For example, the release of adrenaline helps athletes perform better during a race. The surge in adrenaline causes a number of physiological reactions. These reactions can be unpleasant and serve a specific protective purpose. These include:

- Glucose is released into the bloodstream to provide the body with a surge of energy.
- The heart beats faster (beats abnormally) to deliver the extra oxygen in the blood to the muscles and brain.
- Breathing becomes faster to increase the amount of oxygen the body needs to convert the glucose into energy (i.e., the person may start to yawn, feel short of breath, have chest tightness, or feel dizzy).
- Numbness or a cold sensation where blood is diverted from non-vital areas such as vital organs, skin, fingers, and toes.



- Dry mouth and stomach pain, where blood is diverted from the digestive tract to the muscles.
- Muscle contractions during activity, causing pain, bruising, or tremors.
- Sweating to cool the body.
- Changes in vision or seeing spots in front of the eyes due to the dilation of the pupils to increase the field of view.

### Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is a mental experience that can be defined in many ways, and having self-confidence leads to the following conditions:

- Belief in one's abilities and acceptance of one's limitations
- Feelings of well-being
- Ability to manage anxiety
- Being comfortable saying yes and no to others based on personal preferences or values.

Low self-confidence can have causes such as life events, such as a breakup, learning difficulties, mental health problems, past experiences, and genetics.

Low self-esteem can be dissected using the following:

- **Cognitions:** What will others think of me? What if I say something stupid? Why did I say that? I won't have anything to say; they'll think I'm boring.
- **Behavior:** Avoiding seminars, taking a friend to events, worrying and overthinking, cooking when my housemates aren't in the kitchen, focusing on myself when talking to others.
- **Physical Feelings:** Heart palpitations, sweating and hot flashes, shaking, difficulty concentrating in conversations, tension in the shoulders, stuttering, feeling depressed.

If a person is always worried, then they will feel tense and anxious, and as a result, they may change how they behave in social situations. This can create stress and lead the person to worry more and feel more anxious. Therefore, a goal should be created using evidence-based techniques, following a structured approach, to help the person make changes in their behaviors or cognitions. When a person lacks self-confidence, they tend to stay in their comfort zone. This means that the range of life experiences they expose themselves to is limited, and they cannot understand what would happen if they were to find themselves in those situations. In order for a person to expand the boundaries of their comfort zone, they must be open to trying new and different things. Of course, focusing too much on themselves when interacting with others can make it more difficult to actively participate in interactions with others. This means that a person may not perform well during social interactions, which can have a negative impact on their self-confidence. Humans have a limited capacity for attention, and it is very difficult to do two things at once (such as paying full attention to two conversations at the same time). A person cannot attend to his own concerns and mental discharges when interacting socially and conversing with an audience. This mental obsession forces him to do two things at the same time (paying attention to what the audience is saying and paying attention to his internal thoughts), which will cause him to lose focus. Therefore, paying attention and focusing on a specific topic can reduce anxiety and avoid his mental obsessions. Lack of self-confidence will lead to negative and unhelpful thoughts. Negative thoughts fall into four categories: automatic

(arise involuntarily), believable (seem real and true in the moment), situational (relevant to the person's current situation), and distorted (inaccurate and based on how the person is feeling at the time).

### Mind Restructuring and Challenging Negative Thoughts

Mind restructuring is a cognitive technique that changes unnecessary and negative thoughts by identifying and challenging them. This technique helps a person to balance them by creating real evidence against negative thoughts. Challenging negative thoughts can be difficult at first, but it becomes easier with time and practice. First, a person should identify the content of unhelpful thoughts and write down their thoughts on paper every time they notice a change in their mood or anxiety level. Next, they should examine their thoughts in an objective way. That is, they should start collecting evidence against a negative thought to see if it is accurate. You should start with the thought that causes the highest level of anxiety and fear in them and examine it. The evidence should be real, and the person should present a complete picture of it so that they can make a fair decision. It can be difficult to provide objective evidence to begin with, especially against that thought, because the person may be in the habit of looking for evidence to support their negative thoughts. If a person's thinking fits into an unhelpful thinking style, it means they are only looking at it from one perspective. Ultimately, the original thought must be revised, and an alternative thought arrived at, taking into account all the evidence. A person may need to challenge their thoughts several times to notice a difference in how they feel or a change in their belief rankings. As they become more skilled at this approach, they will find that this process becomes more automatic, and they will be able to perceive and judge thoughts as they actually occur. One can also think of thoughts as paths in a field; the more a thought is, the more ingrained the path becomes, until it becomes the automatic path that the person chooses. By challenging these thoughts, the person stops themselves from going down that automatic path and creates a new path.

### Conditions and How to Deal with Worry

Worrying is sometimes normal, and sometimes it becomes a problem. Worry can be identified as the process of thinking repeatedly about a real or potential problem. Worrying thoughts appear in the form of words or images. These thoughts are focused on the future and are based on uncertainty, meaning that something could or might happen. Paying too much attention to these thoughts and constantly worrying about them affects a person's mood and self-confidence. That is, instead of challenging the content of the thoughts, worry should be treated as a behavior. There are two types of worry:

- **Actual Worries:** These worries have a practical solution, and the person can do something about them right now. The worry time technique is used for hypothetical worries. This technique involves setting aside a specific period of time each day to worry about any hypothetical worries that have been collected. Worry time allows the person to postpone worrying so that they can refocus on the present moment, choose how, when, where, and for how long to worry, and reduce the total amount of time they spend worrying in their day.
- **Hypothetical Worries:** These worries have no practical solution right now and tend to be future-oriented. When a person feels confused, it becomes difficult to address practical concerns. Problem-solving is a structured technique used to break the cycle of worry when a worry



arises. Problem solving involves creating and implementing an action plan and consists of four steps (transforming the worry into a problem, identifying all potential solutions to the problem, weighing your options and choosing a solution, and developing a specific plan to implement it).

The first step in dealing with worry is to keep a worry diary. This helps the person identify and categorize their worries so that they can pick up on patterns. Categorizing worries helps a person determine how to manage them. When a person feels insecure, they make negative predictions about future events. Anticipating the worst-case scenario leads them to engage in unhelpful behaviors such as avoidance and safety behaviors. So, to avoid the outcome of their negative predictions, the person avoids situations or engages in certain behaviors that they believe will prevent them from happening. For example, if a person predicts that they will not have anything interesting to say at a social event, they may pretend to use their cell phone to distract themselves. This type of behavior is known as safety behavior. Avoidance and safety behaviors may make a person feel better in the short term, but they contribute to the maintenance of the problem. Because the person does not have the opportunity to test the negative predictions and experience what actually happens in those situations. So to counter negative predictions, a person must experience what actually happens in the situations they avoid or use safe behaviors. We all experience moments in life with fear or worry. Running away and forgetting is not a good solution. To achieve intellectual maturity, you must face the challenges of life. Rest assured that standing up to problems is the best medicine for your self-confidence.

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