



Cedarwood School

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Embracing Imperfections

The Spring season entails a symbolic metaphor that encompasses the opportunity for growth, blossoming and cultivating aspects of our inner self that we are yet to meet, appreciate and embrace – as parents or caregivers and of our children. Cultivating our self-concept as parents as well as our children's is imperative. We are among many influential factors that have a huge impact on self-concept. To inspire cultivation towards the development of qualities of the **Ideal Self**, it's important to acknowledge and take into consideration the current perception of *Who Am I* as an individual.

So, Who Am I?

According to Carl Rogers, the definition of self-concept entails three components:

1. **Self-Image**: an understanding of one's appearance, perceived abilities and personality.
2. **Self-Esteem**: the belief of one's sense of worth.
3. **Ideal- Self**: one's aspirations, dreams, qualities or attributes one wishes to possess.



Children and Acceptance:

Landreth states that "what's important about children can be learned only from children." This essentially means we need to learn to allow our children to 'be'; accept them as they are, allow them to play and explore their own world. Parents' acceptance of their children 'as they are', influences their self-image. In order for us as parents to relate and accept our children, Landreth emphasises that we need to remember children are worthy of respect, capable of positive self-direction and have an innate ability to grow and mature to aspire to become their Ideal- Self.

Self- Acceptance:

Acceptance means being mindful of my abilities, personality and physical attributes, capacities and limitations – my **Self-Image**. It's deeply rooted in self compassion and self-love. Alex Elle mentions how breaking the chains of unhealthy cycles begins with acceptance. She further elaborates how self-acceptance may require bravery in terms of experiencing rejection, even from our families and close friends. However, it teaches us the importance of firstly accepting our weaknesses and fully appreciating ourselves.

Ways to Practice Self-Acceptance:

- Work on your positive strengths while learning to navigate and challenge your own weaknesses.
- Be kind to yourself and your child – through words and practicing self-care.
- Acknowledge your own accomplishments and that of your child: by celebrating a variety of academic, sports or social achievements; or even effort towards a goal.
- Lean into social support: make use of your friends, family, work and school connections.
- Parents are encouraged to model the behaviour that they would like to see in their own children.

Self- care practices

- Journaling/ Drawing/ Colouring in a book
- Exercising
- Eating healthy
- Meditating
- Reading a good book

Cultivating Self-Concept Through Self-Acceptance

“It’s the season of drinking enough water and not forgetting to eat. It’s the season of dressing for comfort and expression...it’s the season for making art for the sake of it.

Everyday activities become sacred and saying the thing that needs to be said... it’s the season of coming up for air via connection and nature and rest. It’s the season for reading the books already on the shelf and also buying new ones even when there are many waiting to be read. It’s the season of enjoying nourishment without punishment, of softening into uncertainty and shedding ‘should’.

It’s the season of trusting inklings and giving decisions times to marinate. It’s the season of listening, of being with, of underground growth that may not be visible to us but is most certainly happening in every moment.”

- Lisa Olivera

Resources:

- Elle, Alex. (2020). After the rain. Chronicle Books LLC
- Moore, C., & Oosthuizen, M. P. (1997). The self-concept theory of Carl Rogers. *Personality Theories*, 149-182.
- Landreth, G. L. (2012). *Play therapy: The art of the relationship*. Routledge.