

How do you View Yourself?

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There are many roads to success. High self-esteem is of crucial significance. A survey conducted of late unveils the disappointing fact that some Hong Kong students are not as assertive as their counterparts around the globe. Instead, the yardstick of self-esteem is below standard and far from satisfaction. However, with constant observation and various perceptions, the situation in our school is not so gloomy and bleak.

One's self-esteem can be embodied in four fields, including intellectual ability, happiness, anxiety and popularity. Factors contributing to the level of these four terms are not hard to comprehend.

In Hong Kong, intellectual ability is decisive in leading to a successful future. Under the spoon-fed education system, Hong Kong students, especially those studying in Arts streams, are required to cram a ton of information into their minds. Generally, students just take in materials without analyzing them critically. Though students can rarely develop a critical mindset, their memorizing proficiency is well-developed. This is the same case in our school. On the one hand, our students have illustrious academic results, no matter in Arts or Science. On the other hand, the school puts great emphasis on the importance of boosting our creativity and innovation. Therefore, numerous mathematics and science-related activities, such as the robot design competition and Science Week are organized on a regular basis. In the meantime, story writing and drama performances are also promoted. The students are fond of taking part in any sort of competition so as to get themselves into a higher and challenging level. So, patently, the self-esteem of our students in this aspect is not so dissatisfying.

Happiness is undoubtedly another criterion to weigh one's self-

esteem. A majority of Hong Kong students tend to be so unhappy that they moan and groan whenever they face a quiz or the yearly examination. Incontrovertibly, Hong Kong is a region with a low index of happiness. When it comes to students, there is no exception. The chief source of unhappiness is materialism. Some Hong Kong students are desirous of products with brand names, since they signify wealth and fame. Another force behind unhappiness is pressure. Parents have high expectations of their children. Together with the stressful schoolwork and public examinations, students' freedom is depleted. The case in our school is quite similar to the result of the survey. The immediate reaction of having tests and an assortment of holiday assignments is voices full of reluctance and tediousness. A smiley face is rarely discovered during lessons. Therefore, lower self-esteem is developed.

Meanwhile, living in Hong Kong, a fast-paced and competitive city, most of the citizens, if not all, are anxious about their work, not least of all students. Students are nurtured under a pyramid of competition. Only if they acquire knowledge will they climb up the social ladder and embrace a promising future. Fortunately, our students are capable of striking a balance between agitation and playtime. Our schoolmates are competent at time management. On the one hand, our schoolmates study with dogged perseverance. On the other hand, pastimes are regarded as indispensable, so will never be excluded from their timetable.

Eventually, students learn in a community which is contemplated as a whole rather than an individual. Different students are special since their personalities are diversified. It in turn affects their popularity, one of the focuses in evaluating one's level of self-esteem. It is conceivable that Hong Kong students care about how their peers view them as it implies social status. The survey reveals that Hong Kong students do not have high self-esteem. This may be attributed to their shyness in

expressing their opinions and their abilities to widen their social circle due to a lack of proper socializing skills. However, from the general observation in our school, it divulges a bright picture. Almost every student is popular and the atmosphere in classrooms is harmonious and there is a prevalence of love. Students find their values in their classes. The more they contribute, the more popular they are. The friendlier they treat their peers, the higher popularity they gain.

Self-esteem is variable. Even students living in the same environment cannot be granted to have the same norm of self-esteem, not to mention the complex and additional factors. Though the survey reveals the optimistic side of some Hong Kong students, it is still my conviction that the yardstick of their self-esteem is not so disappointing. At least, the reality in our school shows the opposite.