

FEELING GOOD ABOUT YOU

THE JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY
THAT LEADS TO SELF-ESTEEM



Module 3 – Worksheet 5

My Inner Child

The little person you used to be is still inside you. Your inner child is probably between the ages of three and seven years old, and is the child you once were. You watched and listened to the people and culture around you, and created perceptions, messages and 'shoulds' about the world and how to function and be safe in it.

S/he can be your fun and playful side, and be your guide and support, giving you valuable information about who you are and what you need.

However, your inner child might be wounded and fearful, and will bring up old insecurities from long ago. If you're not aware of when this happens, s/he might influence your attitudes and behavior. If you allow it, this will get in the way of your ability to be the capable, competent, loveable and valuable adult you now are.

Your inner child makes itself known through the self-talk in your head. When something happens that pushes old buttons from your past, your inner child can become loud and demanding, telling you how to deal with the situation. Often this is based in fear and the need to protect you from things that were once hurtful. Remember that s/he is coming from the perspective of a powerless child, so the fears s/he experienced long ago may continue to surface, even though as an adult you know how to deal with them.

It's important to understand and nurture your inner child, so s/he doesn't interfere with your ability to be strong, deal with life and move ahead. When you notice messages from your inner child, you can have a conversation with yourself, and remind yourself that you're no longer small and powerless.

As an adult you have the knowledge, wisdom and power to handle whatever arises. Reassure your inner child that you, the adult, have things under control, so s/he can relax and be amazed at how capable you are.

Some common messages from your Inner Child might be:

- Don't trust other people, they will laugh at, reject and hurt you
- It's not safe to trust people because they are unreliable and don't do what they say they will
- You're not important and others don't want to hear what you have to say
- To stay safe you have to be quiet and inconspicuous
- Everyone else is smarter than you are

Of course, as an adult you know these messages aren't true, but the things your Inner Child believes are what that you need to be aware of in order to counteract them.

In the space below write some of the messages from your Inner Child, as if s/he were speaking. Then write the 'truth' as you know it now, as an adult. Tell your child what s/he needs to hear to feel safe.