

# Is Competition Good or Bad for Young People?

Discussion about "Feel Good About Failure"

# Feel Good About Failure



20/20  
WEDNESDAY

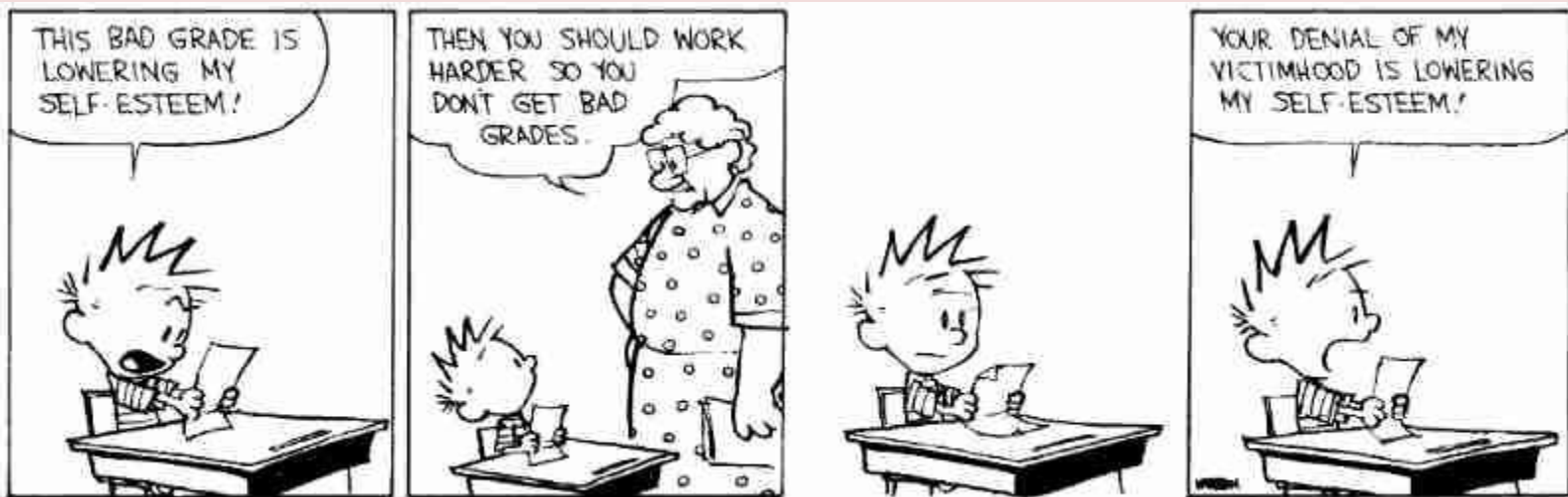
# Feel Good About Failure



# Self Esteem

## But...

does more self-esteem =  
better humans?



Self-esteem: A person's overall self evaluation or sense of self worth.

- Defensive self-esteem:
  - Fragile
  - Correlates with aggressive and anti-social behavior.
  - Focuses on sustaining itself, which makes failures and criticism threatening.
- Secure self-esteem:
  - Less fragile
  - Less reliance on external evaluations.
  - Attained by losing ourselves in relationships and purposes larger than oneself.

# Self Esteem

## **Baumeister's literature review**

- High Defensive Self Esteem...
  - Doesn't improve grades or career achievement
  - Doesn't reduce alcohol usage
  - Doesn't lower violence (in fact Dr. Jean Twenge studies indicates that people with high esteem may be more violent than low self-esteemers when their self esteem is threatened)
  - Is characteristic of people who 'give up' faster.

# Self Esteem

- Humans are motivated to maintain their self esteem.
  - Downward comparisons
  - Rationalization
  - Self-serving bias
  - False uniqueness effect

# Who should I compare my self to?

- *upward social comparison*



Vs.



- *downward social comparison*



Vs.



- *lateral comparison*



Vs.





# Rationalization

- The creation of false, but justifiable, explanations for actions or events. If we can protect ourselves from blame, our self-esteem can remain high.
  - Someone may steal because he is selfish and greedy, but he doesn't want to admit that about himself. So, he says that the people he is stealing from don't deserve the items, they can replace them later, he has no other choice, etc.

# Self-serving bias

- If I fail, I attribute the failure to the situation.

SHOULD YOU GO TO GRAD SCHOOL?  
A WEB TEST

**F**

☐ I AM A COMPULSIVE NEUROTIC.

☐ I LIKE MY IMAGINATION DISHED INTO DUST.

☐ I ENJOY BEING A PROFESSOR'S SLAVE.

☐ MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME IS USING JARGON AND CITING AUTHORITIES.

☐ I FEEL A DEEP NEED TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF ADVANCING LIFE.

=



- If I succeed, I attribute the success to my personality and/or abilities.

SHOULD YOU GO TO GRAD SCHOOL?  
A WEB TEST

**A**

☐ I AM A COMPULSIVE NEUROTIC.

☐ I LIKE MY IMAGINATION DISHED INTO DUST.

☐ I ENJOY BEING A PROFESSOR'S SLAVE.

☐ MY IDEA OF A GOOD TIME IS USING JARGON AND CITING AUTHORITIES.

☐ I FEEL A DEEP NEED TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS OF ADVANCING LIFE.

=



# False Uniqueness Effect

- Falsely believing that we are better than average on a lot of positive traits.

"Even your hands are different!"

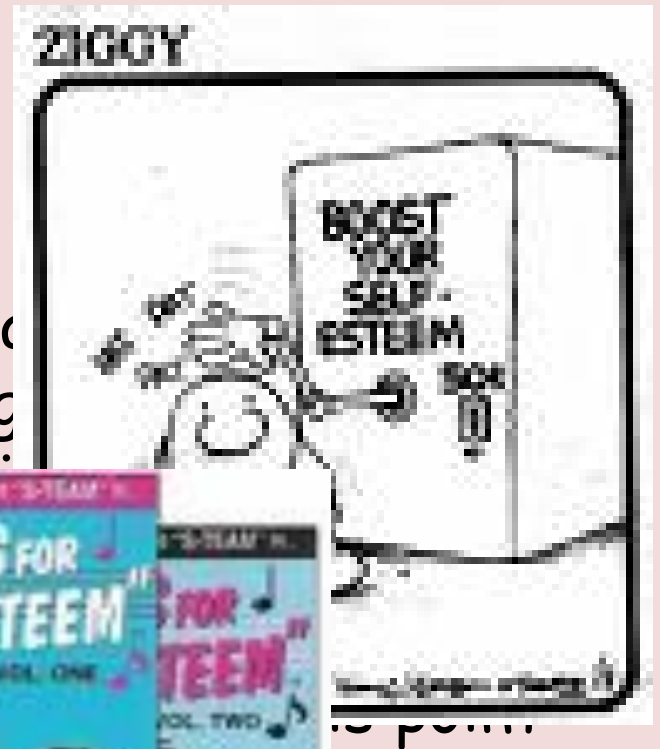
Um,  
what???



*I have an above  
average sense  
of humor!*

# Self Esteem

"Most of us live our lives trying to be a young woman should be a woman and to be exactly



# Self Esteem

What do you think?



=

