We have recently been discussing results from a recent science report titled ‘What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression: identifying and reviewing the 'active ingredients' of effective interventions’ [1]. The next part of this series that we will discuss is from the ‘Beliefs and knowledges’ series of articles, and is titled ‘self-evaluation’.

What is self-evaluation?

Self-evaluation refers to the way we view ourselves – the beliefs and perceptions we hold about ourselves. [2]

Why is a self-evaluation important?

The way we view ourselves is linked to our mental health. For example, people who view themselves very negatively may be linked to getting depression.

What did the research show?

The researchers looked at all of the studies that self-evaluation. They found that studies only addressed this indirectly, but found that young people aged 12-18 found it easier to shift their self-view than those aged 19-24. They also found that self-evaluation tends to be an important component of many mental health problems.

What did young people think about self-evaluation?

Young people who had lived experience of mental health problems themselves thought that self-evaluation was important, and that often therapy needed to be longer in order to help young people really examine who they are. Barriers to therapy also needed to be addressed, such as accessibility.

How could a young person self-evaluate?

You could try keeping a diary or journal and writing the ways you think about yourself. You could even try challenging some of them – if some are particularly harsh, you could find evidence to counter them.

Are there any other resources to help with self-evaluation?

The following link has some great ideas on how to develop a ‘balanced sense of self’: https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/self-care/developing-a-balanced-sense-of-self/

**References**

1. Wellcome. *Report summary: What science has shown can help young people with anxiety and depression*. 2022; Available from: <https://wellcome.org/reports/what-science-has-shown-can-help-young-people-anxiety-and-depression>.

2. Orchard, F., Juliette Westbrook, Brioney Gee, Tim Clarke, Sophie Allan, and Laura Pass. 2021. “Self-evaluation as an Active Ingredient in the Experience and Treatment of Adolescent Depression; an Integrated Scoping Review with Expert Advisory Input.” PsyArXiv. September 7. doi:10.31234/osf.io/8hsy9.