

Contents

Title		Pages
Introduction and the benefits of reflection		3-4
Session 1	Self-esteem and Self-confidence	5-13
Session 2	When You're Not in Education or Work	14-22
Session 3	Managing Emotions	23-31
Session 4	Communication Skills	32-40
Session 5	Adopting a Positive Mindset	41-49
Session 6	Skills and Personal Qualities	50-63
Session 7	Writing a CV and Completing Application Forms	64-72
Session 8	Interview Skills	73-82
Session 9	Stress and Resilience	83-97
Session 10	Time Management and Action Planning	98-107

Introduction

Move on Up! is designed to help you recognise your strengths, understand what may have held you back, and build the confidence to take your next step, whether that's education, training, work, or something else that matters to you.

Many young people have faced situations that affected their motivation, confidence or sense of direction. Some have been judged unfairly, labelled, or told they won't achieve much. Others have had to deal with difficult situations at home, in school, or in their community. These experiences can shape how you see yourself but they do not define your future.

This workbook gives you space to explore your thoughts, feelings and habits, and to understand why you might think or react in the way you do. You'll look at self-esteem, emotions, communication, mindset, skills, and practical steps like CV writing and interview preparation. Each session builds towards helping you feel more in control of your choices and more confident about what you can offer.

The activities are straightforward and reflective. There are no right or wrong answers, just opportunities to understand yourself better and strengthen the qualities you already have. Youth workers, tutors and support staff can use this workbook with you, but you can also work through it independently.

How to Use This Workbook

- You can complete the sessions in order or focus on the areas most relevant to you.
- Each session includes clear explanations, examples, and activities to help you apply the ideas to your own life.
- At the end of every session, there is a short reflection page to help you notice what stood out, what you learned, and what you want to do next.
- You can write directly in the workbook or use your own notebook if you prefer more space.
- Some topics may bring up strong feelings. This is completely normal. If anything feels difficult, you can pause, talk to someone you trust, or return to it later.

This workbook is about helping you move forward with confidence, not by pretending everything has been easy, but by understanding your experiences, recognising your strengths, and building the skills to take the next step that's right for you.

The Benefits of Reflection

Reflection is a practical skill that helps you understand yourself better and make clearer decisions about your future. Life can move quickly, and it's easy to get caught up in what's happening without stopping to think about why you feel a certain way or why certain situations affect you more than others. Reflection gives you that space.

Taking a moment to think about your experiences can help you:

- notice what affects your confidence and motivation
- understand why you react in certain ways
- recognise your strengths and achievements
- spot patterns that might be holding you back
- make choices that move you in the direction you want to go

Reflection isn't about judging yourself or picking apart everything you've done. It's about stepping back, looking at the bigger picture, and learning from it. Sometimes you might realise you handled something well. Other times you might see what you'd like to do differently next time. Both are useful.

You don't have to reflect perfectly or write long paragraphs. A few honest thoughts are enough. Some people like to jot things down straight away; others prefer to think about it later when things feel calmer. Do whatever works for you.

Reflection is built into every session of this workbook because it helps you understand your own story and once you understand your story, you're in a stronger position to shape what comes next.

Session One: Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Understanding How You See Yourself

Purpose of the Session

This session explores what self-esteem is, how it develops, and why it matters. You will look at the experiences and messages that may have shaped the way you see yourself and begin to recognise the beliefs that support your confidence as well as those that may hold you back. By the end of the session, you should have a clearer understanding of your strengths, your patterns of thinking, and the areas you want to develop.

Understanding Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the way you see and value yourself. It influences your confidence, your motivation, and how you respond to challenges. Everyone's self-esteem goes up and down at different points in life, especially if you've had difficult experiences, been judged unfairly, or faced setbacks that knocked your confidence.

When self-esteem is low, you might:

- doubt your abilities
- find it hard to try new things
- expect things to go wrong
- feel anxious or confused
- focus more on your weaknesses than your strengths

These reactions make sense if your experiences have shaped you to be cautious or self-critical. The important thing to remember is that self-esteem is not fixed; it can grow and strengthen over time.

The Benefits of Healthy Self-Esteem

When your self-esteem is healthy, you are more likely to cope with challenges, make decisions that feel right for you, and try new things without being overwhelmed by the fear of failure. You may find it easier to recognise your strengths, adapt to change, and build positive relationships. Healthy self-esteem does not mean thinking you are perfect; it means knowing you have value, believing you can grow, and trusting that you deserve opportunities and respect.

How Early Experiences Shape Self-Esteem

The messages you receive growing up can have a powerful influence on how you see yourself. If you were encouraged, supported, and treated with warmth, you may find it easier to handle life's ups and downs. If you were criticised, ignored, compared to others, or made to feel 'not good enough', this can affect your confidence later on. These early experiences often shape the beliefs you carry into adulthood, even if you are not always aware of them.

Adapting Our Behaviour

As children, we learn how to behave based on the reactions we receive. Some children discover that being quiet, helpful, or 'good' brings approval, while others learn that shouting or acting out gets attention more quickly. What works at home may not work at school, so we adapt again. Over time, these patterns become familiar ways of coping. If your emotional needs were not met consistently, you may have learned to expect rejection or to hide your feelings. These habits can continue into adulthood and influence how you behave in new situations, even when the original circumstances have changed.

Major Factors That Influence Identity

Your identity is shaped by many different experiences. The questions below will help you look at some of the influences that may have affected how you see yourself today. You might think about how others reacted to you, whether you were compared to siblings or peers, or how the roles you saw people like you portrayed affected your expectations of yourself. This activity is not about blaming yourself; it is about understanding the bigger picture so you can move forward with more clarity and less self-criticism.

The Reaction of Others

How did other people react? *For example, did you receive warmth and praise or were you criticised and made to feel inadequate?*

Comparison with Others

Were you compared negatively with others?

Did this alter your expectations regarding behaviour, achievements etc?

Social Roles

Were you able to identify with the roles others like you were portrayed as being?

How much did they impact on your behaviour?

Rules for Living

The messages you received growing up can turn into 'rules' you follow without realising it. These rules may have helped you cope at the time, but they can hold you back now. You might have learned that you must not fail, that you have to please everyone, that showing emotion is a weakness, or that you need to be perfect to be accepted. These beliefs can create a cycle where you expect failure, avoid challenges, and then see the avoidance as proof that you cannot succeed. Recognising that these beliefs are opinions rather than facts is the first step in breaking the cycle.

