

These questions are intended to help your group explore the topic. You do not have to answer them, although you may find it beneficial to do so. Please only share what you feel comfortable sharing and respect others' right to not share.

## **Self-esteem**

### **Social Anxiety West Topic Session**

This topic aims to explore self-esteem and social anxiety. That is, our evaluation of our own worth, what we think we do and do not deserve, how we think we should be treated and our general view of ourselves and our abilities. Low self-esteem is a common part of the experience of social anxiety.

#### **Questions**

- 1. When you imagine yourself in social situations, what do you see? Do you see yourself coping well or struggling? Capable or inadequate?**
- 2. If you imagine yourself struggling or being inadequate, what effect could this have on how you feel and therefore what actually happens in a situation?**
- 3. By what rules or standards do you measure your own self-worth, and would you be happy to measure others' worth by the same standards?**
- 4. If someone has a low opinion of themselves and treats themselves harshly, what will they naturally expect from other people when they interact with them? Consider how this may relate to fears of being negatively judged by other people.**
- 5. Why is it ok (or not ok) to have a good opinion of yourself and treat yourself well? Consider if it is ok for others to have a good opinion of themselves and treat themselves well.**
- 6. How would you feel if the people you care about were treated in the same way you treat yourself?**
- 7. One common theory of low self-esteem relates it to prejudice and, more specifically, our own prejudice towards ourselves. Do you hold a prejudiced view of yourself and, if so, how do you discriminate against yourself/treat yourself unfairly compared to other people?**
- 8. When we treat ourselves badly, what do we hope to achieve or prevent by it? If you can identify an answer, what might be some more helpful ways of achieving that?**
- 9. What makes it hard for you to see yourself compassionately and treat yourself well? What are some ways around these barriers?**
- 10. What have you learnt from discussing self-esteem and what will you do differently as a result?**