

A WORKBOOK FOR TEENS

# EMPOWERED CHOICES

NAVIGATING PEER PRESSURE



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# INTRODUCTION

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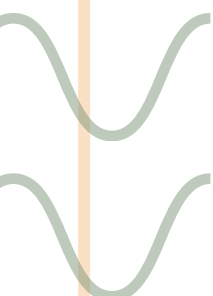
Peer pressure is an ever-present aspect of teenage life, and it comes in many forms. It's important to recognize you're not alone in facing lots of different pressures!

This workbook will empower you with insights, strategies, and the tools needed to make informed choices without giving in to pressure.

Throughout this workbook, you'll explore the dynamics of peer pressure, exploring the types of pressure you might face and and impact on your well-being.

You'll discover the importance of self-awareness, assertiveness, and a strong sense of identity that can withstand external influences.

Remember, the journey through adolescence is an opportunity for self-discovery and personal growth.



So, let's dive in, and navigate these currents with confidence and resilience. This workbook is your trusted companion in becoming the remarkable individual you are destined to be.

# WHAT IS PEER PRESSURE?




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Peer pressure is the influence individuals in a group (typically friends) can have on thoughts, actions, decisions, and behaviors. It usually involves the pressure to conform to specific social norms, and make choices based on the expectations or approval of your peers. When it comes to negative peer pressure, it can lead to you making decisions that go against both your core values and best interests. During the teen years, peer pressure is very common.

It's understandable to have the desire to fit in, but remember that it's important to make choices that are in your best interest! Remind yourself that others should like and accept you for who you are.

*Empowered Choices* can help you recognize various forms of peer pressure and equip you with practical strategies to resist it. Through interactive exercises and real-life scenarios, you will learn how to build self-confidence, make informed decisions, and maintain your individuality - all while fostering positive relationships with friends.



# TYPES OF PEER PRESSURE



There are six different types of peer pressure:

1. **Unspoken**
2. **Spoken**
3. **Indirect**
4. **Direct**
5. **Negative**
6. **Positive**

**SPOKEN PEER PRESSURE:** When someone asks, suggests, or persuades you to do or act a certain way. Spoken peer pressure can come from a group or an individual. Sticking up for yourself in these situations can be difficult, especially when you feel pressured to respond in a certain way.

**UNSPOKEN PEER PRESSURE:** When you are exposed to behaviors by those around you, you're left to choose whether you want to follow along. Unspoken peer pressure can come from music, TV shows, social media, pop culture, fashion trends, and more.

**INDIRECT PEER PRESSURE:** Indirect peer pressure is similar to unspoken peer pressure. An example of indirect peer pressure is if you overhear gossip and decide to spread the gossip to even more people.

# TYPES OF PEER PRESSURE



**DIRECT PEER PRESSURE:** Direct peer pressure can be either spoken or unspoken. An example of direct peer pressure is someone at a party handing you an alcoholic beverage. That individual would be directly pressuring you to engage in drinking alcohol, even if you don't want to. Direct peer pressure is on the spot, making it more difficult to avoid.

**NEGATIVE PEER PRESSURE:** When you're asked to behave a certain way that goes against your morals and values. Oftentimes, negative peer pressure involves something dangerous or damaging. An example of negative peer pressure is skipping class or physically harming someone.

**POSITIVE PEER PRESSURE:** Positive peer pressure can be helpful, as it supports you. An example of positive peer pressure is surrounding yourself with people who influence you to better yourself.

Have you ever experienced any of the six types of peer pressure? If so, what kind(s)?

# PEER PRESSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

Have you felt pressured by others in the following situations?

PRESSURE	NEVER	SOME TIMES	ALL THE TIME
Drinking alcohol			
Smoking weed			
Vaping or using nicotine products			
Using other drugs			
Engaging in bullying or cyberbullying			
Shoplifting			
Sneaking out			
Lying to people in authority (parents, teachers, etc.)			
Driving without a license			

# PEER PRESSURE QUESTIONNAIRE

PRESSURE	NEVER	SOME TIMES	ALL THE TIME
Engaging in sexual activity			
Projecting/misleading on social media			
Skipping classes			
Looking a certain way for someone else			
Taking dangerous risks while driving			
Fighting with someone			
Engaging in criminal activity			
Sending explicit images to someone			
Cutting a friend off			





# RISKS OF PEER PRESSURE

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Imagine a realistic scenario where you may face peer pressure. Answer the following prompts identifying the risks and rewards of this scenario actually happening.

Scenario

Saying “yes”

Saying “no”

Benefits

Benefits

Risks

Risks



# RISKS OF PEER PRESSURE

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Saying “yes”

Benefits

Risks

Saying “no”

Benefits

Risks



Consider whether the risks outweigh the benefits - or not!

# THE EFFECTS OF PEER PRESSURE



Read the scenario below and decide what may happen if you decide to give in to peer pressure.

**It's a Friday night and your parents told you it's best if you stay in tonight because you have plans the following night. Your friend texts you asking if you can drive the two of you to a house party. You tell her you can't because your parents want you to stay in. She encourages you to sneak out, go to the party, and drink.**

**WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE EFFECTS OF CHOOSING TO GO OUT WITH YOUR FRIEND?**

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# EXPERIENCE WITH PEERS



Each time you have a negative or positive experience with a peer, friend, new friend, or old friend, write about it.

## Circle One: Peer, Friend, New Friend, Old Friend

What happened?

How did this experience affect you?

Was this a positive or negative experience? What about this experience do you want to reflect on?

# EXPERIENCE WITH PEERS



Circle One: Peer, Friend, New Friend, Old Friend

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# EXPERIENCE WITH PEERS

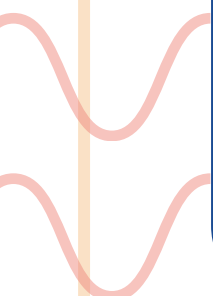


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# SOCIAL MEDIA PRESSURE



Feeling pressure when scrolling on social media is extremely common. Often, it's easier to be pressured by social media posts or messages because you are not with the person face-to-face.

Have you ever been pressured on social media? How did it make you feel?

How do you prevent yourself from getting into uncomfortable situations on social media?

Do you feel like you've felt more pressured by people in person or on social media? Explain.

# MY EXPERIENCE WITH RISKY BEHAVIORS



What kind of risky behaviors  
have you engaged in?

Was there a negative or  
positive outcome?

Did you feel pressured by anyone to engage in these risky  
behaviors?

Were you uncomfortable? Did you talk to anyone about it?

# ARE YOU PUSHING LOVED ONES AWAY?



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If you've given in to peer pressure, you might distance yourself from trustworthy and good family and friends. Pushing others away allows you to feel better about your choices.

Why is it a bad idea to distance yourself from trustworthy people in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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Arguments and conflict might arise with these people, but it's important to remember they are just looking out for your safety and well-being.

Who are some trusted people in your life who look out for you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Has there been a time you've noticed yourself distancing yourself from trusted people in your life?

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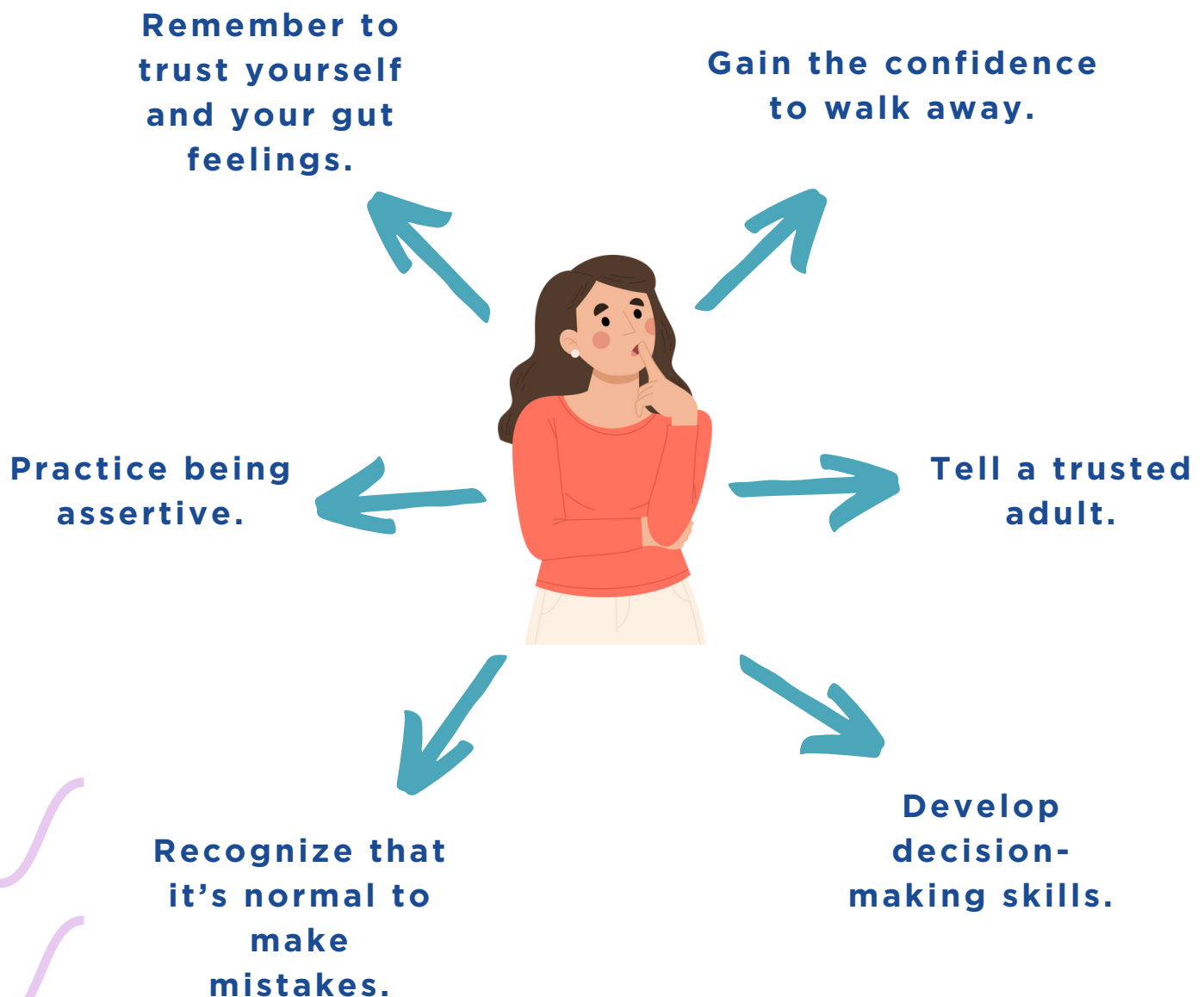
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# COPING STRATEGIES

Learning how to cope in situations where you feel pressured may help you make better and healthier choices when faced with a challenging situation.





# AVOIDING CONFLICT

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Effectively avoiding conflict ensures you're protected from anything negative happening to you. If someone isn't a good friend, they may want to start a fight if you are not doing something they want you to do. What can you do?

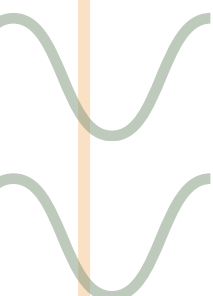
## **DEAL APPROPRIATELY**

You don't owe anyone an explanation about why you are making the choice that you're making! If you are in an uncomfortable situation where your friends are pressuring you, it may help to explain why you're making a certain choice.

## **KNOW WHEN TO TALK TO SOMEONE**

Talking to someone (a trusted adult, friend, sibling, or others) about an uncomfortable situation may open doors for help. Having a trusted person who knows what's going on is important so they can help you.

## **KNOW WHAT'S ACCEPTABLE AND WHAT ISN'T**



Setting boundaries with your friends allows them to know what is acceptable and what isn't. Talk with your friends to set boundaries. If they don't respect them, it may help to have another talk - or even find new friends!

# WHAT MAKES A GOOD FRIEND?



What are some qualities of a good friend?

What are some qualities of your friends?

What are some things a friend should never do to you?

Have your friends ever done any of these things to you?



# DO YOU HAVE A TRUSTED FRIEND?



Having a trusted friend can be helpful, especially in a social setting where you feel pressured. Answer the following questions about your trusted friend.

Do you have a trusted friend? If so, who is it?

How can this friend help you in the future? Will this friend stick up for you?

What does this friend know about your current situation with peer pressure?

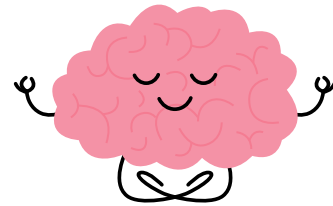
Has this friend ever stuck up for you in the past? If so, what happened?



# OVERCOMING PEER PRESSURE

In some situations, it can be awkward and difficult when you're put under pressure by those around you. Here are some effective ways to overcome peer pressure.

**Stay mindful of your feelings, and ask yourself if the situation feels comfortable and right for you.**



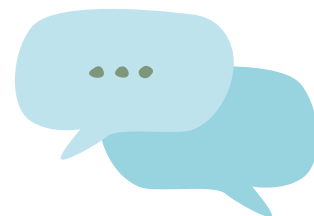
**If you are ever struggling to say no, plan to be prepared to back out of an uncomfortable situation with an excuse.**



**Go to a friend who has a similar personality as you so they can help you and show you the right path to choose.**



**When stressed out, avoid resorting to unhealthy habits. Try listening to music, watching a funny movie, or talking to your parents or a friend.**



# RESIST PEER PRESSURE



Resisting peer pressure can be difficult. Read the scenario below and respond, explaining how you would “RESIST.”  
**You walk into the bathroom and see your friends. They ask if you want to hit their dab-pen. You politely decline. They keep asking you to hit the pen, but you do not want to.**

**R:**

**R:** Reason why it is a bad idea.

**E:**

**E:** Excuse. What would be a reasonable excuse to get out of the situation?

**S:**

**S:** Say “No.” Be loud and clear.

**I:**

**I:** Ignore.

**S:**

**S:** Speak out against your peers.

**T:**

**T:** Thanks. Thank yourself for protecting yourself!

# SAYING “NO” AND SAYING WHY



If you're asked to engage in something you don't want to do, it can be hard to say no. Practice saying “no” and stating why.

You should sneak out for the party tonight, instead of asking your parents. You can just go back in before they wake up.

Your response:

Instead of working out and eating healthier, just try to avoid eating at all costs! The results are so much quicker.

Your response:

Hey, do you want to hit my vape in the bathroom with me?

Your response:

# SAYING NO TO DRUGS



Drugs can damage your health forever. They are dangerous, and can even cause people to die. Being pressured to take something that you don't want to is difficult! You might say, "Thanks for offering, but I'm not interested in trying drugs. I've seen how they can mess up people's lives, and I want to stay focused on my goals and stay healthy. Let's find something else to do or talk about. I value our friendship, and I hope you understand and respect my decision."

Ways you've said no before:

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It can be hard to see someone close to you start using drugs. Friends can be very influential. But always remember how drugs can affect you.

How will you be prepared the next time someone encourages you to do any substances? What will you say?

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Remember that making excuses or even lying to leave an uncomfortable situation is not bad. It's important to protect yourself from any harm.

# WHAT WOULD YOU DO?



Read the scenario below and decide what you think you should do.

**You are out with your friends at a football game. You and some of your friends bump into some teens that you do not know. They ask you to smoke weed with them. All of your friends decide to smoke with them. They really want you to smoke with them, too.**

What would you feel comfortable doing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What is the right thing to do? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How would you feel about your choice? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you worried what others will think? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think it's important to do what is the most comfortable for you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# SELF-ESTEEM



Not fitting in because you're not giving in to peer pressure can lower your confidence and self-esteem. It's important to remember that not fitting into a social setting does not define who you are - you're just following what makes you feel comfortable. Maintaining self-esteem is important.

Answer the following questions.

**5 THINGS I LOVE ABOUT MYSELF**

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**WHY AM I PROUD OF MYSELF?**

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**WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE MYSELF HAPPY?**

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**PEOPLE WHO LOVE AND CARE ABOUT ME:**

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# SETTING BOUNDARIES

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Do you have anyone in your life you want to set boundaries with? Has this been difficult? Have you talked to them about it in the past?

What would you ideally want to say to this person? Practicing what you plan/want to say can help you comfortably do it in the future.

Name of person: \_\_\_\_\_

What are they doing to make you feel uncomfortable? What would you want to say to them?

# SETTING BOUNDARIES

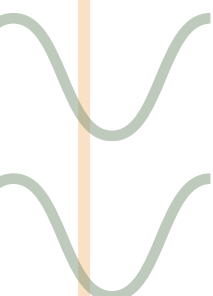


Name of person: \_\_\_\_\_

What are they doing to make you feel uncomfortable? What would you want to say to them?

Name of person: \_\_\_\_\_

What are they doing to make you feel uncomfortable? What would you want to say to them?





# SOCIETAL PRESSURE



Feeling pressured by the media and by society as a whole can be difficult to cope with. It's extremely common for people to create a facade on social media to put out or maintain a certain image. Remember that many people only show a polished version of themselves on social media. Feeling like there is a high beauty standard is normal - but remember that Photoshop and photo editing exists!

Are there certain people on social media you compare yourself to?

You can unfollow people on social media you find yourself comparing yourself to. You can do this by unadding or unfollowing them. If they pop up on some sort of "explore" page, try to find a "not interested" button. Constantly comparing yourself to others only harms you.

# STOP, THINK, DECIDE



## STOP BEFORE MAKING A DECISION

What is something risky you have wanted to do? Were you pressured by someone else?

## THINK AND REFLECT

What are possible consequences of this risky behavior? What would happen if you *didn't* do it?

## DECIDE

What are you going to do? Will this decision benefit or hurt you?

# TRUSTING YOUR INSTINCTS



It's always important to pay attention to how you feel. Most of the time, if something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't going to contribute to you in a positive way. Think about times you've felt pressure in any way and answer the following questions.

How do you feel when you are being pressured?

What happens in your body when you feel pressured?

What are you thinking when you are being pressured?

[illegible]