

YOUR *Aha!*TM LIFE

**Comparing Self *to* Others:
Safeguarding *your* Self-Esteem**

An Accelerator for Your Aha! Life



Comparison is the thief of joy

Theodore Roosevelt
26th U.S. President, 1901-1909

Comparing Self to Others: Safeguarding Your Self-Esteem

In this Accelerator, you will identify real-life comparators, what you are comparing, why, and the emotion the comparison evokes. Then you will decide on an action that you can take to safeguard your self-esteem.

Part 1: Comparators

Choose who you are comparing yourself to (or who you tend to compare yourself to).

Examples include:

Family Member	Close Friend	Professional Peer	Role Model
Stranger	Social Media "Friend"	Professional Superior	Acquaintance

Who are you comparing yourself to? _____

Part 2: What Are You Comparing?

After you identify the "who", then identify what you are comparing with that person. It could be more than one answer.

Examples include:

Job/Career (e.g., position/title, performance)	Physical Appearance (e.g., attractiveness, fit)
Relationships (e.g., circle of friends)	Personality (e.g., outgoing, reserved)
Intelligence (e.g., analytical, creative)	Material Wealth (e.g., home, car, dress)
Intimate relationship (e.g., partner, marriage)	Other

What are you comparing? _____

Part 3: Why Are You Comparing?

After you identify what you're comparing, then determine why?

Examples include:

Self-Evaluation: motive is to know myself better and measure my progress; Am I on track?	Self-Improvement: motive is to become a better person	Self-Enhancement: motive is to be better than others and protect my image/status at all costs
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Why are you comparing? _____

Note: Social comparison is described as either **upward or downward**. Upward social comparison is when we compare ourselves to someone who is perceived to be or is performing better than we are. Downward social comparison is when we compare ourselves to someone who is perceived to be or is performing worse than we are. Both types can lead to negative and positive effects.

Part 4: What Emotions Does the Comparison Evoke?

After you determine why you are comparing yourself to another, then identify how you feel. What emotion does the comparison evokes.

Examples include:

Inspiration	Admiration	Confidence
Jealousy	Envy	Insecurity
Optimism	Shame	Dissapointment
Criticism	Resentment	Pride
Fear	Eagerness	Worry
Depression	Pity	Empathy

What Emotions Does the Comparison Evoke? _____

Part 5: Actions to Safeguard Your Self-Esteem

Now that you have explicitly identified the who, what, why, and how of your social comparison, you have greater clarity to identify the actions you can take to safeguard your self-esteem.

Some actions might include:

Practice gratitude by listing five things you're grateful for in your life; and do this daily	List your qualities and embrace your strengths and weaknesses	Pause and reflect on your own desires rather than what you feel is socially expected
Set your goals and intentions, then focus on them	Help someone else	Stay open and willing to learn
Reflect on your values and how they show up in your life	Give grace and be mindful that you're seeing a snapshot of the other person's life	Join in the enjoyment and celebration of another's success

Actions to Safeguard Your Self-Esteem:

- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____

Comparing Self to Others Worksheet

Who are you comparing yourself with?	What are you comparing?	Why are you comparing?	How do you feel?	Actions you will take?
<p>EXAMPLE ONLY:</p> <p>Coworker</p>	<p>She is better at forming relationships and influencing others than I am, which is one reason she is getting promoted.</p>	<p>Self-improvement: I want to be better at establishing relationships. I'd like to get promoted too. Maybe this will help me.</p>	<p>I envy her, but she also motivates me to try new things to form relationships and get outside my comfort zone. That will help me regardless of a promotion.</p>	<p>I will stay open and be willing to try new things. I will set a goal to go to lunch with one new colleague or senior leader every month.</p>

For more on the topic of social comparison, check out the Your Aha! Life podcast, [How to Stop Comparing Yourself to Others: Know Your Self-Worth](#) and this article, [Social Comparison Theory & 12 Real-Life Examples](#) by Dr. Alicia Nortje.

NOTES
