

## HYPER SELF-HELP RESOURCES

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# OVER- IDENTIFICATION WITH A GROUP OR IDEOLOGY

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Presented by The Rural Hub

It is very common for people to place themselves in recognized and labelled social groups. It helps people feel connected to one another.



It is particularly common among groups of young people; who often segregate themselves into different peer groups. These groups can be based on common lifestyle characteristics, such as shared beliefs, interest in clothes and music, and a preference for certain types of activities.



As a teenager, you are becoming increasingly independent from your family unit. You are beginning to make more and more decisions for yourself and because this is a new experience, you may not always be sure of what to do. You may find some support and direction from your group of peers.



This isn't necessarily a bad thing!  
You might identify with groups in order to develop a sense of identity and this can help to build a positive image of yourself. It can also help you to discover cultural norms by indicating successful and unsuccessful ways of participating in your chosen culture.



However,  
it is possible to overidentify.  
Which is the action of  
identifying oneself to an  
extreme degree, causing  
damage to your own  
individualism or objectivity.



Worryingly, research developed in the United Kingdom has highlighted several personality traits where individuals might be more vulnerable to the threat of radicalisation and 'over-identification with a group or ideology' is one of them.

The tendency to easily identify can make you an ideal target for dangerous people who you may encounter online. These can include groomers, radicalisers and recruiters for extremist groups.

These individuals and groups prey on young people with this trait by appealing to your desire for a sense of belonging.





These individuals and groups will prey on your naivety and exploit your openness. They will promise you a shared vision and an opportunity to be a valued part of something. This can be very tempting to an eager or trusting individual.



But these groups are dangerous, and it is important to realize that they do not value you. They perceive your eagerness as gullibility and wish to take advantage of you.

There is always someone better you could speak to.

Here are some tips to increase your self-esteem which will help you protect yourself from overidentifying with a group or ideology by building a stronger sense of individuality.

## No.1

**Be mindful.** We can only fix something when we recognize what the problem is. As soon as you find yourself going down a path of self-criticism, gently note what is happening. By becoming aware of our negative self-talk, we can distance ourselves from the feelings it brings up.

**Keep in mind - *these are thoughts, not facts.***



## No.2

**Stop comparing yourself to others.** Appearances are rarely what they seem. Comparisons only lead to feelings of inadequacy. Besides, just because someone else appears happy on social media or in person does not mean they are happy. Don't waste energy on speculation, put the focus on yourself.



## No.3

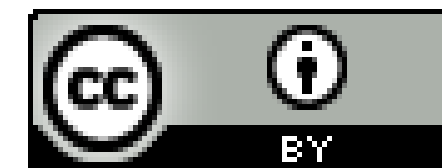
**Appreciate** your talents. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. Albert Einstein said, “Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.” Recognize what your strengths are and the feelings of confidence they awaken, particularly in times of doubt.



# DON'T LET ANYONE CONTROL YOU

# HYPER

How Young People are Engaged by Radicals



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