



Self-esteem through the Wizard of Oz

created by
Shelley Marsh

shelley@reshetnet.com



As you go through life...



Think...



Love...



**And Have Courage.
And Always Remember,**



**Don't be SCARED
Know that
You Are SACRED**

For more information on this topic contact

shelley@reshetnet.com

0797 071 8334

www.reshetnet.com

Communities, wellbeing and self-esteem

When the characters from the Wizard of Oz first meet, they are all disconnected from their families, from their communities. From roots.

Dorothy was literally removed from her family and her community, taken up and spun around in a tornado. Her only connection is to her pet dog Toto. The story focusses again and again on her desire to return 'home'.

Each of the other characters describe their own disconnection from their loved ones and their communities.

That disconnection from society and family leaves them all searching. Each character is searching for meaning, for purpose and for self. Their journey on the yellow brick road is a metaphor for the exploration for purpose and meaning.

The wizard represents a power that others believe in. The characters are devastated when they realize he is a small man behind a curtain. After a long journey, which had a purpose, they are disheartened, and have no confidence that they will ever find a way 'home' for Dorothy.

Throughout the journey, and when they finally meet the great Oz, they become each other's support network. They believe in each other. They are there for each other as they face scary situations which are traumatic.

They give each other confidence and courage throughout the journey, enabling increased self-esteem, resilience and well-being.

The wounds of the traumas they have each faced, begin to heal.

The Wizard of Oz recognises their abilities and the characters recognise their own strengths as well as that they have become reliant and inter-dependent on each other, which is also a strength. Increased self-esteem and well-being allows us to function well in society. Being involved in communities which value us, gives us a sense of value and self-worth. That in turn, enables us to live and work harmoniously with others.



In Hebrew, the word Oz translates as strength/power. Self-esteem focusses us on our own strength, knowing we have the power to bring the best of ourselves to the communities we live in.



Overview of the characters



Dorothy

She has a constant friend, Toto, who she knows will always be there for her. Dorothy is insightful and quick to assess the needs of others. She helps friends by giving them positive encouragement.

The Scarecrow

The scarecrow believes he needs a brain. His insecurities affect his self-esteem. How many of us believe we are not clever enough? How does that affect our self-esteem? It is only when he *believes* he has received a brain that he feels differently about himself.

The Tin Man

The tin man believes he needs a heart. He believes he cannot give or receive love. How many of us worry that we do not love others in the right way? How many of us feel we are not loved or loveable (i.e. worthy of receiving love?) It is only when he *believes* he has received a heart that he feels differently about himself.

The Lion

The lion believes he needs courage. What is courage? Is courage the ability to speak up for what you believe in? Is courage acting in a brave manner? Few people would describe themselves as having courage – they are often described by others as being courageous. The lion does not ever receive courage. He receives a medal – an award offered to him by *someone else* for his 'courage'.

The Wizard of Oz

The Wizard teaches us a great lesson. He may be seen as a fraudster, an imposter. He has tricked everyone into believing he has some great power. The great power that he has is that others believe in him, but does he believe in himself? The wizard teaches us that our own potential lies within each of us. He gives awards to others and then they believe in themselves.

The wizard forces each character to face their own fears. The wizard acknowledges that we are all unique individuals, with our strengths and weaknesses. He believes in others – he helps other to believe in themselves.



These characters represent a simple metaphor of self-esteem. We can explore how others view us, and how that changes our self-perception. We can examine how healthy self-esteem allows an individual to remain confident, even under difficult circumstances.

We can see from this story that we are all able to build up other people, as well as improve our own self-esteem.



Scarecrow: "That's the trouble. I can't make up my mind. I haven't got a brain...only straw."

Dorothy: "Well, how can you talk, if you haven't got a brain?"

Scarecrow: "I don't know. But some people without brains do an awful lot of talking, don't they?"

Dorothy: "Yes, I guess you're right."



The activity below offers the facilitator an opportunity to listen.

Divide the group into five sub-groups

- Dorothy
- The Scarecrow
- The Tin Man
- The Lion
- The Wizard

Hand out a print out of each character to the relevant group.

Ask participants to discuss the questions on the sheet, related to their character.

Ask the groups to then feedback to the facilitator, On a flip chart, the facilitator notes key points which will then connect to self-esteem and how we might help increase the self-esteem and overall well-being n others around us.

The facilitator might choose to connect the importance of:

- community on well-being and self-esteem
- meaningful conversations
- social inclusion & exclusion (bullying, LGBTQ+, sexism, ageism, racism)
- sense of purpose
- valuing others
- sense of self



- friendships

DOROTHY



What do you know about this character?

How does she feel about herself?

If you were her friend, what would you tell her you value in her?

The Scarecrow



What do you know about this character?

How does he feel about himself?

If you were his friend, what would you tell him you value in him?

The Tin Man



What do you know about this character?

How does he feel about himself?

If you were his friend, what would you tell him you value in him?

The Lion

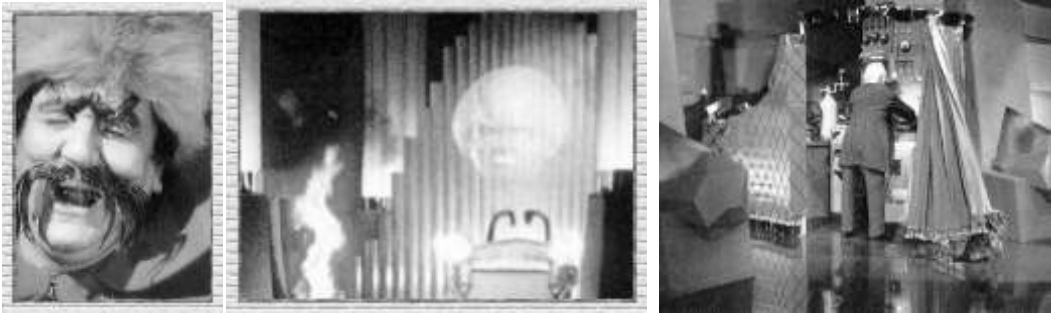


What do you know about this character?

How does he feel about himself?

If you were his friend, what would you tell him you value in him?

The Wizard



What do you know about this character?

How does he feel about himself?

If you were his friend, what would you tell him you value in him?