

# THE ADOLESCENT SELF

Strategies for  
Self-management,  
Self-soothing,  
and Self-esteem  
in Adolescents  
David B. Wexler

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# The Adolescent Self

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in Adolescents

**David B. Wexler, Ph.D.**

The teenager who explodes by putting a fist through a wall or who desperately turns to cocaine or who retreats into anxious and withdrawn states is telling us, in his or her own way, about a disturbed sense of self. These behavior patterns, bizarre or self-destructive as they appear, actually reflect attempts to rebalance or protect the fragile self.

*The Adolescent Self* describes an innovative treatment program for troubled adolescents that addresses central problems of the "self." The problems of substance abuse, anxiety, aggression, self-destructive behavior, eating disorders, and mood swings can usually be traced to fundamental deficits, particularly in the ability to self-soothe.

In designing interventions, the author and his colleagues draw upon the accessing strategies of Milton Erickson and the cognitive therapy of Aaron Beck. Strategies for visualization, stress inoculation, cognitive restructuring, assertiveness training, and psychodrama are described in detail. As illustrated in the extensive case examples, innovative interventions, such as "freeze-frame," the "ally," and the "time machine," help teenagers identify and integrate new options.



**David B. Wexler, Ph.D.** is the former Director of Psychological Services at Rancho Park Hospital, where he developed the internationally recognized PRISM model for self-management. He is also the Director of the Relationship Training Institute in San Diego.

**"Anyone working with adolescents who reads  
*The Adolescent Self* is in for a treat."**

— Sanford Shapiro, M.D.

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