

Unit 8

Self-Reliance

Introduction

In Grade 9, you discovered what self-reliance, dependency and decision-making mean. You also discussed the importance of fighting against dependency and being a self-reliant citizen. You will now find out more about self-reliance, dependency and decision-making in this unit. This unit also introduces the importance of criticism, self-criticism, open-mindedness and civility.

Lessons

1. Examples of Self-reliance
2. Examples of Dependency
3. Self-reliance and Decision-making

What you will learn

You will:

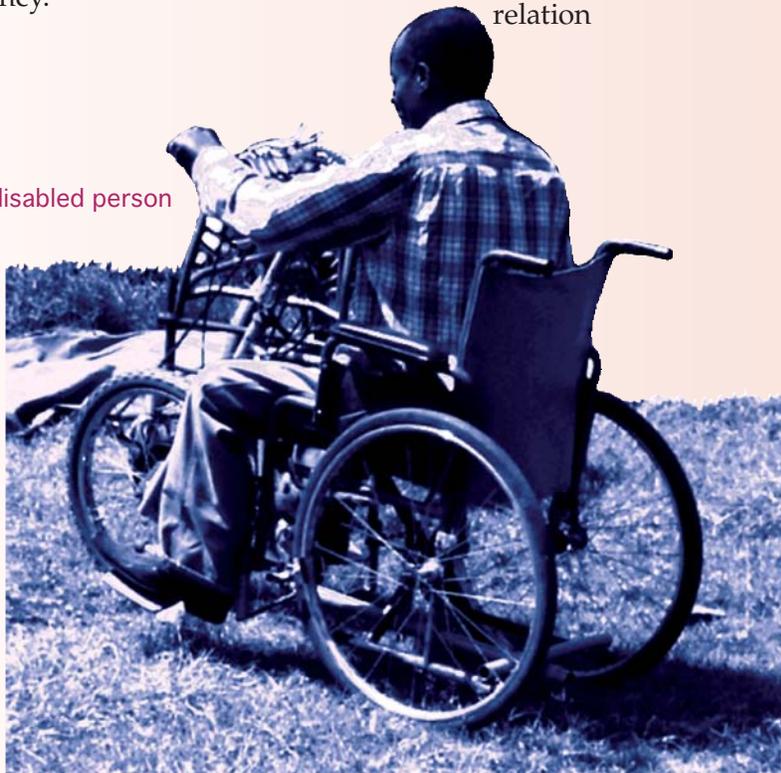
- understand what distinguishes self-reliance from dependency.

- appreciate the relationship between self-reliance and decision-making.

Key words and concepts

- Civility
- Criticism
- Debate
- Dependable
- Harmonious relation
- Motivation
- Objective
- Open-mindedness
- Rationality
- Self-criticism
- Subjective

A self-reliant disabled person



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LESSON

Examples of Self-reliance

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- explain factors that manifest self-reliance.
- be a self-reliant citizen.

What do you think are the main characteristics of a self-reliant person? Talk about some self-reliant people whom you have met.

You learnt the definition of self-reliance in Grade 9. Self-reliance is the ability to support and take care of yourself and to make decisions independently. It means to be free from the undesirable influence and control of others. Self-reliant people are dependable, have harmonious relationships with others, appreciate the good work of others, and are ready to learn from others.

Self-reliant people are dependable, which means being reliable. If someone is dependable, you trust him/her and have confidence in him/her. You rely on dependable people because they do not change their mind without sufficient reasons. Since self-reliant people have self-respect, they love and respect themselves and others. They also appreciate the good work of others. They do not think that they know everything. As they also know their weaknesses, they are ready to learn from others.

A self-reliant person has a good relationship with other people, be it in school, the workplace or in the community. They have good social relationships and social skills when living and

working with others.

Self-reliant people do not feel inferior to others. They know that they have some good qualities. They also know that they are capable of contributing something to the welfare of others. These kinds of people manage to work well with others. This quality is very important because it helps meet the needs of the community and to promote the public interest.

If you have good social skills, you are able to get on very well with other people at home, school or anywhere else. Social skills are habits which help you to have good relationships with others. These include sharing materials and ideas, asking for help, helping others, active listening, using names, encouraging and admiring others.

You can develop good relationships with other people using these skills. Admire your friends when they score good results; encourage them when they try to do something. Share materials and ideas with other people. Lend your books and other materials to your friends; they can also lend you their books. Ask friends to help you when you face problems; they could give you good ideas. Support them when they are in need of help.

Use the names of the people when you talk to them. People feel good when you talk to them, calling them by their name. Listen carefully when other people talk to you. This shows that you are paying attention to them.

Examples of Self-reliance

Copy this table. On the copy, make a list of examples of good social skills. Examples are provided.

Good social skills	Poor social skills
1 Always look at people when talking to them.	1 Do not listen to others.
2 Ask other people how they are.	2
3	3
4	4

CASE STUDY

Polite shopkeeper and rude customer

Nesru is a shopkeeper in a small town. Debebe is his customer. There were other customers when Debebe reached at the shop. Nesru was moving between the shelf and his customers. As soon as he comes in Debebe shouts:

Debebe: Give me two-kilos of sugar, one-kilo of rice and soap.

Nesru: Hello Debebe, how are you? How is life?

Debebe: Do not worry about life! Give me what I want! Hurry up!

Nesru: OK! Just a minute! These people have come earlier; let me finish with them,

Debebe: Oh! I am in a hurry! You are very slow...!

Nesru: OK...Debebe! Here is the sugar... and kilo of rice...and soap. Let me calculate... thirty-six Birr!

Debebe: I will pay next week when I get my pay.

Nesru: Oh Debebe, I cannot do this. Please pay and take your items.

Debebe: Record the amount and I will pay. Do not be so greedy!

Nesru: You have not paid for what you have taken last time. Please there are other customers, let me deal with them.

Debebe: You are greedy! Here is the money, give me the goods!

Nesru: Thank you. Bye!

Discuss these questions as a class

- Who has good social skills? Nesru or Debebe?
- How do you see the communication skills of Debebe and those of Nesru?
- List the bad and polite words Debebe used in his conversation with Nesru. Is it good to use these kinds of words?
- How did Nesru manage to cool down Debebe's temper? Is Nesru a good shopkeeper? Why?

REMEMBER

- ❑ Self-reliance means to support and take care of yourself and to make decisions by yourself.
- ❑ Self-reliant people are dependable. They have good relationships with others, appreciate the good in other people and are ready to learn from them.
- ❑ If you are able to communicate well with others and have good social skills, you will feel more confident and it will be easier to talk to and work with other people.

LESSON 2

Examples of Dependency

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- list the characteristics of a dependent person.

- What are the main characteristics of a dependent person?
- What, in your opinion, are the negative impacts of dependency?

In Grade 9, you learnt about dependency. Dependency can weaken your ability to stand on your own. In this lesson you will learn more about the features of dependency, such as lack of moral responsibility, inability to be dependable, lack of courage to act, lack of motivation, lack of initiative for general welfare. People who are dependent cannot make decisions for themselves.

Dependability is one of the main features of self-reliance. Others rely on dependable people because they know that they always do what they say and they make wise decisions. If you are not reliable and dependable yourself, you are more likely rely on others.

Dependant people's behaviour is not predictable and they do not stick to their principles. They are inconsistent in their actions and decisions because they are always being influenced by others. They always do what they do to appease their friends or other people, even if they do not really agree with them. These people may shout when others shout,

boycott simply because others do that, support a given party when their friends support it.

Lack of courage is another sign of dependency. Courage is the ability to control your fear in a difficult situation. Dependent people do not have the courage to take action and to make decisions at the right time. They are afraid to act or they make decisions influenced by others. Such people lack self-confidence and self-respect. They rarely make their own suggestions. If they found somebody doing something wrong, they would not have the courage to tell that person about his mistakes. If they see something put in the wrong place, they would just leave it there.

Another sign of dependency is a lack of motivation. Motivation is eagerness to do something. Dependent people are not self-motivated because they lack ambitions and goals. They do not have clear goals and they do not plan their activities. Often they have weak relationships with other people, so they have limited opportunities to join in different activities.

Dependent people do not take the initiative to take part in different activities which are helpful to others. They do not take the initiative because they do not have their own ambitions. Because they do not take the initiative, they contribute nothing to the community. They do not help their family, community or school and they may not act

Examples of Dependency

to promote their own interests either. For example, dependent students may not read their books or do their homework unless they are told to do so.

To avoid dependency you should have your own personal ambitions and goals. These motivate you to act to improve your personal life. As a patriotic citizen you should also have ambitions to help others and to take your own initiative to promote the welfare of our national community.

Form groups, discuss the following questions and let your group leader present the summary of the discussion.



- Dependent people are unreliable. How do you explain this statement?
- What do you think the negative impact of lack of courage, motivation and initiative taking could be?
- Do you take the initiative to do something for your family, school and community?



Independent people, regardless of their physical conditions, find ways to solve their problems and meet their needs

CASE STUDY

The Ups and Downs of School Life

Mola completed Grade 10 with poor results three years ago. Mola is the eldest child in his family. His parents were not educated. There were no well-educated people in his village either. Most of the people considered completing high school education as a great success.

Mola knew that there was an opportunity for college education but he did not consider himself

capable of joining college. He considered himself inferior to other students. He did not have long-term goal to be a college student. Mola also did not have any ambition to score better results. What he wanted was to be promoted from one grade level to the next. Although he attended class regularly he did not study hard at home. He did his assignments but without much attention. Mola did not get the chance of college education because of his poor results.

Examples of Dependency

Discuss the following possible causes for Mola's failure:



- Lack of self-confidence
- Lack of ambition and long-term goals
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of initiative

Could you add any more?

REMEMBER

- Dependency is a belief that people or groups cannot solve their own problems without outside help.
- Signs of dependency include lack of dependability, lack of courage and motivation to take action.
- Lack of initiative to do something important is also the sign of dependency.

LESSON 3

Self-reliance and Decision-making

By the end of this lesson, you should be able to:

- explain how a self-reliant person makes decisions.

What is the relationship between self-reliance and decision-making?

Self-reliance and decision-making are closely linked. Self-reliant people make good decisions because they make decisions based on facts and experience. They exercise constructive **criticism** and **self-criticism** and they are **open-minded**.

Self-reliant people engage in constructive criticism and self-criticism. Criticism means disapproval of faults. A self-reliant person has the courage to criticize others when he/she observes



Teamwork — a sign of self-reliance

that their actions or ideas are wrong. But when you criticize others, you should try to be very **tactful**. You have to encourage others to do the right thing instead of blaming them for their faults.

It is not enough just to criticize others. It is also important to accept criticism by your friends, parents or teachers.

This does not mean that you accept all criticism. You have to think about what others have said and decide if the criticism is valid or not. If it is constructive you should accept it because it can help you to improve what you do. It is also important to accept and learn from your mistakes and apologize for your wrong-doings.

You have to exercise self-criticism. Self-criticism means evaluating your own actions and behaviour. It means thinking about your achievements and weaknesses in a fair way. We all need to do this sometimes. You have to assess yourself when you think that you have done something wrong or if you have certain weaknesses.

Self-criticism is one of the qualities of a self-reliant person. But do not over-criticize yourself. Do not blame yourself when you make mistakes because everybody makes mistakes. Being self-critical is only useful when you learn from your mistakes.

Open-mindedness is another good quality. It means to be receptive to different ideas and arguments. It includes **openness** and **civility**.

Self-reliance and Decision-making

Open-mindedness is being prepared to consider ideas different from your own. It means changing or modifying your own position when you find the other person's idea better and more convincing.

Open-mindedness does not mean that you

need to accept all views of other people, because not all ideas are good. As an independent person you have to think about what other people say critically and carefully. You have to be open-minded to appreciate different ideas and arguments.

CASE STUDY

Discouraging or encouraging others

Hirut is a young writer while Takele is an experienced one. Hirut gave the draft of her book to Takele to get comments. The following is their conversation:

Hirut: Good morning Ato Takele, I have come to your office to get comments about my book.

Takele: Oh! Good!

Hirut: How do you like the book? What are its strong and weak points?

Takele: I have found your book to be very weak! It has no strong points at all.

Hirut: What do you mean?

Takele: I am telling you that this is not a well written book.

Hirut: If you say that the book has many weaknesses, why do you not tell me some of its problems?

Takele: I cannot count and list the weaknesses of your book because it is full of them.

Hirut: If you want to criticize my book, you have

to tell me at least some of its weaknesses and strengths.

Takele: I do not want to waste my time. I advise you to throw it away and start writing a new one because the book is below the acceptable standard.

Hirut: Your comments are unfair and hurtful! I believe that any work could have some strong points and weaknesses. You fail to tell me this because you have not read it properly. Give me my book and let me go!

Read the following questions and discuss the points in groups.



- What is the problem with Takele's criticism regarding Hirut's book?
- How should Takele have given criticism on Hirut's book?
- How will this type of criticism affect the relationship between Hirut and Takele?

Civility means politeness or a polite way of treating others. But it is more than politeness. Civility means treating others with respect, even when you do not agree with them. You have to be civil or polite when you take part in a public debate. Citizens stick to the common rules or standards of civility when they participate in debates. Here

are some of the rules of public debate:

- Recognize that other people, including your friends, may have different points of view.
- Be ready to listen to the views of others and be willing to take part in a constructive debate.

Self-reliance and Decision-making

- Focus on solutions when you discuss problems.
- Deal with competing ideas based on their merits.
- Be objective. Do not make it personal and do not go in for personal attack. A famous writer said, “Separate the people from the problem.”
- Your argument should be based on facts and accurate information. This will help you to convince others.
- Civility requires that different people make an honest effort to understand the views and reasons of others.
- Respect the rights of others to be heard. Everybody at a public meeting has the right to be heard. You have to respect this. Do not interrupt when others are talking.

You have to try to persuade others but you also have to be ready to be persuaded. You may have a discussion with your classmates about a particular

issue. You and your friends may disagree because you have different views about that issue.

You have to know that you may be wrong while your friend’s ideas may be better. Each of you should consider the points if they are persuasive. Accept other ideas if they are convincing. Defend your own point of view if the views of others are not convincing. Then, having made your decision, accept the consequences that follow.

In pairs discuss the following questions.

- Why is important to be open-minded and civil in public debates and in everyday life?
- How can you persuade other people to agree with your point of view when you take part in a discussion? Do you use statements like these: I am right! You are completely wrong! Why do you not accept my ideas?

Persuade your partner to give you something of theirs. Think about that language that you use and listen to their side.

CASE STUDY

Tadesse, Desta, Emebet and Taye work together on a committee. They have weekly meetings. Their meetings are too long and full of disagreements. Emebet does not talk much; her comments are short and clear. Desta talks too much and repeats the same thing instead of raising new ideas. Tadesse talks even more and does not stop until interrupted by others. He discusses points which are not related to the agenda. In most cases Desta and Tadesse attack one another instead of talking politely. Taye is moderate; he listens carefully while others talk. The last meeting of the committee was interrupted

because of a disagreement between Tadesse and Desta. Tadesse was talking when Desta interrupted:

Desta: Tadesse, I have a comment.

Tadesse: Do not interrupt! Let me finish my idea!

Desta: I am not interrupting. The points that you raise are not related to the agenda. You like talking too much! This is a bad habit. You have to focus on the agenda.

Tadesse: You interrupt while I am talking because you do not want to listen to my points! You do not want to listen; what you like is

Self-reliance and Decision-making

talking, talking and talking! That is all.

Desta: I do not want to listen because the points that you raise are not related to the agenda. This wastes our time!

Tadesse: I am not wasting time! I am contributing ideas!

Desta: If we raise unrelated points we waste our time. My point is clear: let us stick to our agenda and discuss relevant points!

Discuss the following questions as a class

'Do not focus on people; do not criticize people but their ideas; be ready to listen.' These are among the rules of public debate.



- What kind of problems do you observe in this discussion?
- Who spoke politely? How?
- How can they resolve their differences for the future?

REMEMBER

- Self-reliance and decision-making are related.
- Self-reliant people are critical and self-critical.
- Open-mindedness is a good quality.
- Open-mindedness is the readiness to consider the ideas of others.
- Civility is being polite in the way you treat others.

UNIT SUMMARY

Self-reliance means to support and take care of yourself and to make decisions by yourself. Self-reliant people are dependable. They have good relationships with others because they appreciate other people in their work and are ready to learn from them. If you are able to communicate well with others and have good social skills, you will feel more confident and it will be easier to talk to and work with other people.

Dependency is a belief that people cannot solve their own problems without outside help. The signs of dependency include lack of dependability, lack of courage, lack of motivation to take action and lack of initiative to do something important.

Self-reliance and decision-making are related. Self-reliant people are critical and self-critical. Self-reliant people are also open-minded. Open-mindedness is the readiness to consider the ideas of others. Civility is being polite in the way you treat others.

GLOSSARY

<i>Criticism:</i>	The act of showing disapproval of opinions, faults and bad qualities in others.
<i>Debate:</i>	A formal discussion expressing different opinions.
<i>Dependable:</i>	A person or thing that can be relied on to do what you want.
<i>Harmonious relation:</i>	A good relationship with others.
<i>Initiative:</i>	The ability to decide or act on your own without waiting for somebody to tell you what to do.
<i>Motivation:</i>	Eagerness or interest in doing something.
<i>Objective:</i>	Not influenced by personal opinions or feelings, considering only facts.
<i>Open-mindedness:</i>	To be ready to listen and consider different ideas and arguments from your own.
<i>Rationality:</i>	To try to find reasons to explain your behaviour, decisions, etc.
<i>Self-criticism:</i>	Criticizing one's own actions and behaviour — to think fairly about one's achievements and weaknesses.
<i>Subjective:</i>	A point of view which is based on one's opinions rather than facts.
<i>Tactful:</i>	Being careful not to say or do anything that will annoy other people.
<i>Welfare:</i>	The general health, happiness and safety of a community.

UNIT REVIEW EXERCISES

Do these review exercises in your exercise book.

Part I – Multiple choice

- Which of the following is true about self-reliant people?
 - they force others to accept their opinion
 - they do not ask for apology when they do something wrong
 - they accept the consequences of their decision
 - they do not criticize other people
 - none of the above
- Which of the following refers to readiness to consider or accept the ideas of others?
 - open-mindedness
 - self-reliance
 - being rigid
 - civic commitment
 - none of the above
- Which of the following is an example of dependency?
 - self-motivation
 - having a harmonious relation with others
 - changing decisions when others change theirs
 - being inconsistent
 - (c) and (d)
- Which of the following goes with civility?
 - listening to the views of others
 - lacking long-term goals
 - persuading people instead of forcing them
 - giving priority to the common good
 - (a) and (c)

Part II – Short answers

- List three examples of good social skills.
- Write three examples of the characteristics of a self-reliant person.