

Build Your Self-Esteem

In the last lesson, we looked at how negative experiences in your past can affect your self-concept. Self-esteem isn't quite the same as your self-concept, but they're related.

Your self-concept is your perception of yourself. Your self-esteem is a measure of how happy you are with yourself. By increasing one, you can increase the other. Today, we'll look at building your self-esteem.

It's much easier to present ourselves authentically to others when we feel good about ourselves.

Give your self-esteem a boost and think more highly of yourself:

1. **Guarantee success by starting small.** Success breeds confidence and self-esteem. Create small successes in your life. Drink water instead of soda at lunch. Pay all of your bills on time this month. ***Any little thing that would make you feel good about yourself is a great place to start.***
2. **Do something that frightens you.** Afraid of dogs? Make a visit to the dog kennel. Afraid of public speaking? Tell a story to several friends simultaneously. Prove to yourself that you can stretch beyond your current comfort zone.
3. **Show off your strengths.** Are you a great athlete? Sign up for a football/softball team. Get out and show your stuff. It feels good to do something that you do well. Remind yourself of how skilled and competent you can be. This will boost your confidence and sense of self-esteem. It's enjoyable to show off a little, too.
4. **Do something for others.** When you help someone else, you feel good about yourself. Deep down, the average person worries about being selfish or inconsiderate. Do something for someone else and you'll convince yourself that you're a good person.
5. **Eat a healthier diet.** When you eat poorly, you don't feel good. ***You don't know how bad you feel. You're just used to it.*** Your mood and outlook on life will improve when you improve your diet.

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6. **Avoid comparisons.** There's always someone else smarter, better looking, wealthier, or more charismatic. There are a lot of people in the world. Notice the progress you're making in your life and be happy with that.
 - We always choose exceptional people to compare ourselves to. So yes, Brad Pitt is better looking and Warren Buffett is wealthier than you. This will always be true for 99.9999% of the population.
7. **Fill your mind with uplifting information.** There are plenty of workshops, music, and books with a positive message. ***With positive information entering your brain on a regular basis, you'll be happier with life and yourself.*** By the same token, avoid negative information and people.
8. **Observe your thoughts.** If you pay attention to your thoughts, you'll be both amazed and horrified. It's amazing how your mind jumps around to different topics and the crazy things it says. If a real person acted in the same way, you'd call the people in the white coats to come make a pick-up.
 - Notice how odd your self-talk can be.
9. **Create a list of affirmations.** Make a list of affirmations that you'd like to believe and keep it handy. Whenever your mind is idle, repeat your affirmations to yourself. When you're not busy, your mind will start chattering. Take control of the chatter and keep it positive.
10. **Remember your greatness.** You've accomplished some impressive things. Make a list of everything you've managed to do in your life up to this point. It's easy to forget how far you've come. Make a list and review it often.
11. **Learn something new.** Children are so proud of themselves when they learn new something new. It might not be as obvious to us as adults, but we experience the same phenomenon. Learn how to bake a cake from scratch or how to hit a golf ball. What interests you? Try to learn a new skill each month.
12. **Exercise.** You know you're supposed to do it. When you don't do things you know that should be done, you become annoyed with yourself and doubt your self-discipline. Exercise feels good, too. Take care of yourself.
13. **Introduce yourself to someone new.** This activity carries no risk and has a lot of upside. You feel like you have control over your life, begin to

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eliminate any shyness, and possibly make a new friend. Everyone fears strangers to some extent. Minimize yours and you'll feel more confident and pleased with yourself.

Everyone can benefit from a little more self-esteem. ***When you think more highly of yourself, you're in better position to change your self-concept and your life.*** Think of more ways you can boost your self-esteem and apply these concepts every day.

In the next lesson, you'll see how you can have a more positive self-concept – and raise your self-esteem – by being consciously proactive in several areas of your life.

“A healthy self-love means we have no compulsion to justify to ourselves or others why we take vacations, why we sleep late, why we buy new shoes, why we spoil ourselves from time to time. We feel comfortable doing things which add quality and beauty to life.”

– ***Andrew Matthews***

Here's what you need to do today:

Make one small, positive change to your daily routine starting today. Keep it small and simple.

You'll boost your self-esteem and guarantee your improvement by continuing to perform this small change each day until it becomes a habit.