

## **Building Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem**

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When you practice tips for building self-confidence and self-esteem, you can see results in as little as 7 days, even more in 21 days, and tremendous results in a few months.

**1. Stay focused and relaxed so you can empty your mind of distractions and increase your ability to perform, regardless of the task at hand.**

**2. Distinguish between who you are and what you do.**

Identifying our self-worth with our careers, spouses, children, etc., is a dangerous thing. What happens if you lose your job or lose your spouse? What happens if you do everything possible to be a good parent and one of your children turns out to be an alcoholic?

**3. Make a list of your assets--emotional, physical, professional, and personal.**

**4. Keep a log of all the positive comments people have made to you and of all the tasks you did well.**

**5. Focus on your potential instead of your limitations.**

All of us have weaknesses.

- Determine which ones you can improve.
- Make whatever changes in yourself that are possible.
- Quit worrying about those things you cannot change.

**6. Look for victories, large and small.**

Each time you acknowledge yourself, whether the accomplishment is large or small, you increase the probability of achieving even more.

**7. Give yourself pep talks.**

- I know I can handle this.
- I have done many more difficult things before.

**8. Avoid negative body language, such as averted eyes, slumped shoulders, etc.**

**9. Smile.**

When you smile, the serotonin level in your brain increases, your blood circulates more freely, your respiratory system operates with greater efficiency, and a variety of organs and glands are engaged, each of which increases your overall well-being.

A smile imparts messages to others such as:

- I'm glad to be here.
- I want to be your friend.
- I feel at ease.
- I can help.
- I would like to learn about you.
- I know what I'm doing.
- We're going to make a good team.
- I'm okay, you're okay.

In any culture, a smile is the universal indicator of friendliness and well-being.

**10. Don't put yourself down by making comments like these about yourself to others:**

- It's only my opinion, but...
- I could never...
- This may sound dumb, but...
- I'm probably wrong, but...

**11. Replace self-criticism with regular, positive self-talk.**

**12. Nurture yourself as well as you nurture other people.**

**13. Make time for regular physical activity.**

**14. Do something every day that makes you feel good.**

**15. Cultivate people who build you up and help you grow.****16. Trust others.**

Few people make it without the help and support of others. Self-confident people delegate carefully and methodically, but freely and easily, because they know that confidence placed in others helps create a victorious circle wherein both parties bolster each other's confidence.

**17. Learn from your mistakes and then move on.**

Confident people learn that mistakes need not drag them down and don't dwell on them. They regard mistakes as life lessons that give them insights they did not have before.

**18. Handle criticism well.**

No matter what you do in life, there will always be someone who will offer well- or ill-constructed criticism of what you have done. Self-confident people don't fear criticism--some actually seek it. Even harsh criticism often contains some nuggets of truth.

To benefit from criticism without becoming defensive:

- Let the other person finish what he/she is saying before you respond.
- Indicate that you have understood what you just heard, whether or not you are in agreement, by summarizing the criticism in your own words.
- Don't attempt to justify your behavior or actions, belittle the criticizer, make light of what the person says, or offer rebuttal criticism.
- Remain open to and address the criticism about what you have done or allegedly done. Do not be open to criticism about who or what you are.
- Stay focused on the activity or issue in question.

**19. Be around, observe, and imitate self-confident people.**

- How do they work?
- What do they say?
- How do they dress?
- How do they carry themselves?
- When do they pause?
- How do they interact with others?

Ask self-confident people why they do what they do. Imitation is a fundamental mode of learning.