

Enhance Self-Esteem

You create your reality with your beliefs, and it doesn't even matter if your beliefs are true. If you believe something, it becomes true for you. Negative beliefs about self-esteem, body image, career, and romance will become true just as a positive belief will also become true. What you call reality is what you've agreed reality to be for you. And you can change it.

Self-esteem results from what you do in life. If you feel good about the way you relate to others, and about your accomplishments, you already have high self-esteem. The same is true in reverse. If you are not getting what you want, it's time to work on your self-esteem. From this day forward, *never do anything that lowers your self-esteem.*

Changing your self-image takes time. But once you've set it down as a clear goal you're on your way and you can do it. The idea is to have patience and know that you'll get where you want to be.

1. Always be honest about who you are, and what you feel.

The first bit of advice on self-esteem is to be direct and honest in your communications with other people. Don't lie, and don't fake what you really feel, because in the long run it won't serve you. If your neighbor wants to borrow your lawn mower and you don't want to loan it to him, don't say yes and then chastise yourself for not having the guts to say no. In relationships with others, don't pretend to care when you don't. Don't spend time with people you don't like. Don't pretend to accept liberal ideas to win acceptance if you're really a conservative. It's little things like this that add up to low self-esteem. Learn assertiveness training which teaches you simple techniques to stand up for your basic human rights without feeling guilty.

To be less than honest in your communications with others means you repress your real feelings. Human potential trainers know there are three ways to generate change in a human being: 1) add something: people, things, environment, awareness or challenge; 2) take something away: people, things, environment, programming or challenge; 3) get the person to be themselves. This is transcendental change—when an individual removes his pretenses of fear and expands himself. This is a giant step toward high self-esteem.

Take the time to think about any lies you are currently living. Don't judge yourself as you explore each area; the idea is to attain awareness, not evoke guilt. When you are done, fantasize yourself telling a close friend about the lies, and imagine your friend's reaction. Maybe your reasons for wearing a mask are not valid anymore.

2. Value *being* more than *belonging*.

This means to value what is right and true for you, more than what other people think. This can take courage. Courage is a key word when you're talking about high self-esteem. Courage is the willingness to be afraid and to act anyway. Courageous people are a minority, as are those with high self-esteem. But their relationships are superior to those of people with low self-esteem.

People with high self-esteem are not necessarily well liked, because they are more independent, and usually outspoken. They express who they are and what they believe, regardless of what others think. This is often intimidating to those whose esteem binds them to convention. Remember, for the person with high self-esteem—being is more important than belonging.

3. Don't take negative input personally.

If you are criticized, or someone says something negative to you, don't take it as an attack on your self-worth. The idea is to begin transforming the way you experience your life. Realize that what someone else says or does, short of physical violence, does not affect you. Only what you think about what they say or do affects you.

From this moment on, realize that other people see you through a veil of opinions and conclusions comprising their viewpoint—a viewpoint based upon all their past experiences. The way they react to you, they would react to anyone who represented to them what you represent. So there is nothing personal in it. Don't allow someone else's lack of balance to cause a problem in you. You also need to realize that you see people the same way—through your own viewpoint which may not accurately reflect the way things really are.

Be more compassionate towards yourself. You're probably good at showing compassion to others. You forgive their shortcomings, but can't forgive your own. Think about showing the same compassion to yourself as you show to others.

4. Don't compare yourself to others.

A hierarchical viewpoint is always self-defeating. You are who you are and it isn't a valid comparison to judge yourself against someone else. Ostentatious displays of expensive possessions usually indicate someone is lacking in self-esteem. They need these trappings of wealth to impress you and hide their insecurity. The same is true of the attention-seekers. Only those people who have high self-esteem are secure enough to project a modest and reserved image to others.

Choosing a role model to emulate is entirely different than basing your self-esteem upon how you stack up against someone else. You can stop this practice by catching yourself and using this thought-stopping technique: always notice self-defeating thoughts immediately, and say these two trigger words to yourself, "Success Opportunity." Then replace the negative thought with a positive one. As an example, if you catch yourself thinking "I'll never be the top salesperson in this company," stop, and silently in your mind say, "Success Opportunity." Then, say to yourself, "Every day I improve my sales techniques and every day I move closer to the top position." Then, visualize yourself having already accomplished your goal. This technique assures positive instead of negative subconscious programming.

5. Clarify your goals.

Do you really want to establish high self-esteem or is it something you think you should do, or something that sounds good? Change takes time and energy and commitment! If you really want high self-esteem you'll take the ideas in this book and really begin to do something with them.

After years of working with people in seminars, I've seen a pattern of people using a position of poor self-esteem as a way to control others. They are so helpless, or so unconfident, that others must step forward and handle things for them. Thus there is a negative payoff in remaining in their current position.

If by chance you are one of those allowing others to do it for you, you need to be aware that they will probably end up doing it *to* you. So, the idea is to become very clear about what you really want. Probably the fastest way to do this is to ask yourself the right questions. Do you really want what you say you want? If you establish high self-esteem, things will change. Think about the changes. Are any of them undesirable? If so, you may have discovered a subconscious block to a high self-image.

6. Choose to view your problems from a new perspective.

It is time to see the areas of your life that are not working as opportunities for new solutions. You are not what you have and you are not what you do—so it is time to stop being so scared of making a mistake, and start creating a new opinion of yourself. *You can only attract into your life that which you feel worthy of.* Think about that. It is critically important. You can only attract into your life that which you feel worthy of. So isn't it time to see yourself as worthy and deserving of the very best that life has to offer?

7. From this day forward, never do anything that lowers your self-esteem.

If self-esteem is the result of what you do in life, then to increase your self-esteem you need to do things that support your goal. When you do things that make you feel good about yourself, you build your self-esteem. When you do things you don't feel good about, you lower your self-esteem.

It follows that to feel worthwhile, you must maintain a satisfactory standard of behavior. You must correct yourself when you're wrong, and if your conduct is below your standard, and you don't correct it, you will suffer because you will feel as if you have failed in something.

8. Allow yourself to take chances and risks.

If your life is ever going to get better you have to take risks. There is no way to grow without taking chances. Sure, uncertainty and danger are part of the process, and in growth you give something up without knowing for certain if the next step is going to be any better. But be aware that failure to risk is often the surest way of losing, for if you don't risk, the need to take the chance may eventually come to you, and the odds of success will be reduced when you are forced to act.

9. Act as if you have high self-esteem even when you know you don't.

You don't need to change how you feel about something to affect it, if you are willing to change what you are doing. Change begins with action, and your feelings will follow your actions. Behavior is more important than emotion in creating change.

So the question to be asking yourself is, "How can I behave as if I had more self-esteem?" Can you improve your posture, for starters? What about dressing your best? How can you speak with more authority? How can you act more sure of yourself? How can you be more honest and direct with others? How can you live more authentically? How do you stick up for yourself when you need to?

10. Realize no one can be perfect.

If you continually measure yourself against a standard of perfection that is impossible to achieve, the automatic result is poor self-esteem. In other words, if you aren't perfect, you think you're a failure. If you're a person who has mentally eliminated the middle ground it's time to take a realistic look at your viewpoint. If you're not in perfect physical shape, it doesn't mean you're grossly fat. If you're not the leader in your profession, it doesn't mean you're a loser. It's time to start viewing life more realistically, and basing your self-esteem upon these realities.

11. Base your decisions and actions on rational thinking, instead of emotions.

Your emotions are the result of your past programming, and won't always serve you when used as the foundation for decisions. Emotionally based decisions too often tend to make being right more important than winning the game.

Your subconscious mind works very much like a computer, programmed for survival—your personal survival or that which you identify with—which might include your mate, your family, or your country. And your subconscious computer judges your safety based upon your past experiences. Maybe next weekend a friend invites you to go out on a boat. But you've been afraid of water since you nearly drowned at age eleven. Your subconscious mind scans the memory banks and decides that it would be a bad idea to accept the boating invitation. It equates water with drowning.

In other words, your subconscious computer says it is all right to live your life just the way you did in your past. And in so doing, you survive. The result is your current life, *just the way you are!* You see, your computer can't be wrong. To be wrong threatens its very survival. It refers backwards through your past for all its present guidance and justifications, and like the machine it is, it has to be right. Everyone of us is programmed to have to be right to survive. And your reactions are often based upon events from your past that aren't valid anymore.

Please understand that your subconscious computer doesn't care if you get what you want out of life. It just needs to be right to protect itself. So, you get to be right and lose the game. You either win or lose in life. You get what you want or you don't.

Be honest with yourself about what you are feeling and accept the experience of your emotions without being compelled to act on them. Compulsive actions lower self-esteem.

The rational approach is to let others be right and see how much more often you win the game. Be aware that the other guy is programmed to be right. He needs to be right. And unless you allow him to be right, his survival is threatened and there will be conflict. Maybe you can let him be right with a simple phrase such as, "Yes, I understand that." Often that's enough. His subconscious computer is no longer threatened and he can then concentrate upon the issue. The key is to approach all problems from the other person's vantage point.

12. Seek joy and fulfillment in your current relationship and career before looking elsewhere.

It might be a lot wiser to make some changes in your own internal standards instead of searching for emotional stimulation in a new situation. Reality exists as that which you experience. The way you experience life is based upon the way you choose to view what happens to you. Your viewpoint is the deciding factor in whether you experience life negatively or positively.

You will resolve most of life's problems through changes in your perspective. By changing your viewpoint you can eliminate the effects of a problem, so you're no longer affected. And if you're no longer affected by a problem you don't have a problem, although nothing about the problem situation may have changed.

Read this tip over a few times to fully grasp it. It is a life-changing concept.

13. Live in the now.

We exist now and now is all that is. Now is outside of time. There is no past in which you were incomplete and there will never be a future in which you will become complete. Until you accept that you can only exist now, you will believe that fulfillment awaits you in an illusionary future, if only you take the proper actions. This belief destroys the experience of now and you continually live in illusion. This very moment is it. Nothing is hidden. For years you've calculated, hoped and planned how it would be someday. You've dreamed and schemed ... and *this is how it all turned out*. This is all there is. You've been planning all your life for the future, but you will never be aware of the future in the future. You will only be aware of it in the now. We do not exist in time. We exist in self.

People with high self-esteem use the time component, but they never accept it as a reality that entraps them in actions to achieve fulfillment in an illusionary future. The idea is to be always, at this moment, fulfilled, perfectly at peace and in balance.

14. Don't always expect the worse.

This is about expectations of disaster. Doomsday thinkers project every situation into a worst case scenario. "My child didn't come when I called her. She's probably been kidnapped." "My headache is probably a brain tumor." "If the Democrats get back in office they'll destroy the economy, and everyone will be out of work, and the bank will repossess our home, and we'll have to live in the streets." If this relates to you, it's time to stop. Right now. Use the thought stopping technique described earlier in Chapter One.

15. Learn how to accept compliments.

People with low self-esteem will put themselves down when a compliment is offered. Someone compliments their suit, and they respond, "Gee, I was going to give it to the Salvation Army." Or, someone says, "You gave a great speech," and they respond, "Oh, my timing was bad and I forgot a couple important points." These responses deflect attention away from the fact they've been complimented. Their self-esteem is so low they can't accept a compliment without qualification. But in your case, from this moment on, no matter what your level of self-esteem, respond to a compliment with a simple, "Thank you."

16. Think about the negative sub-personalities that are lowering your self-image.

Within you lies the whiner and the critic, the manipulator and the martyr, the builder and destroyer—each with its own mythology and co-existing as part of your personality. So, begin by thinking of one of your undesirable personality traits. Next, imagine an image emerging to represent this part of you. It could be male or female, an animal, elf or fairy, a monster, a symbol or anything else. Let this image just happen without attempting to consciously form it. And once the image has taken form, give it a chance to express itself without any interference or judgment. Have a mental conversation with it. Give it a name. And become aware of who or what causes this aspect of you to assert itself. Also see if you can identify any fear associated with this sub-personality. Do this exercise over and over until you've uncovered all your undesirable sub-personalities.

The goal is to recognize these sub-personalities the moment they emerge. And instead of being absorbed by sensations, feelings, thoughts and desires, you simply observe the sub-personality objectively, without judging or interfering. Then tell yourself, "This sub-personality is within me but it is not me." Continual refusal to identify with the sub-personality can cause it to disappear.

17. Examine your beliefs.

Discover the source of any beliefs that are lowering your self-esteem. All our beliefs go back to a cause—an event or a series of events in your past. Sometimes knowing the cause can eliminate the effect, or at least the knowledge can be used as the basis of reprogramming. If you can't find the cause of a belief on your own, a hypnotist using regressive techniques or a psychotherapist may be able to help.

18. Use self-hypnosis

Daily use of self-hypnosis mind programming will support your goal of enhancing your self-esteem. The final chapter tells you how.

Increase Self-Esteem Summary

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2. Value *being* more than *belonging*.

3. Don't take negative input personally.
4. Don't compare yourself to others.
5. Clarify your goals.
6. Choose to view your problems from a new perspective.
7. From this day forward, never do anything that lowers your self-esteem.
8. Allow yourself to take chances and risks.
9. Act as if you have high self-esteem even when you know you don't.
10. Realize no one can be perfect.
11. Base your decisions and actions on rational thinking, instead of emotions.
12. Seek joy and fulfillment in your current relationship and career before looking elsewhere.
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• *Affirmations* •

The final chapter explains how to use the following affirmations as self-talk and how to include them in a self-hypnosis format for daily mind programming.

"I project a positive self-image."

"I live authentically."

"I do not take the opinions of others personally."

"I am always aware that my thoughts are creating my reality."

"I am clear on my intent to have the highest self-esteem."

"I speak and act in ways that support my self-esteem."

"I base my decisions upon rational thinking and not emotions."

"I'd rather win the game than get to be right."

"I accept the experience of my emotions without being compelled to act."

"I easily accept compliments."

"I am compassionate towards myself."

"Every day, in every way, I gain in self-esteem."

"I support my self-esteem with daily programming."

"I am very sure of myself."

"I am self-reliant and self-confident."

"I am filled with independence and determination."

"I have great inner courage."

"I can do whatever I set my mind to."