

Improving Self-Esteem

Imagine how your outlook on life might improve if you were more inclined to value your own abilities than engage in comparison to others.

CELEBRATING
YOUR
ACCOMPLISHMENTS
is a sign of a
healthy self-esteem.

Self-esteem is having respect or confidence in yourself and how you interpret your abilities, appearance, and/or attributes.

It reflects an overall sense of value or worth, and it affects our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Self-esteem impacts every area of our lives, including our mental and emotional health and how we operate at work and in relationships.

Along the spectrum of self-esteem, some people have a high sense of self-worth. Others find they have very low self-esteem, possibly facing symptoms of depression or anxiety. Feeling inadequate, unlovable, and/or unworthy may accompany a lower self-image. This could be a symptom of depression, and your doctor or mental health professional

can help.

DETERMINING SELF-ESTEEM LEVELS

There are some useful ways to determine your level of self-esteem. Consider these possibilities:

- **Success and failure** - Do you downplay or explain away your successes? Many times we set perfection as the goal, only to be regularly disappointed. Are you able to receive compliments, or do you merely brush them aside? Being able to celebrate our accomplishments is a sign of a healthy self-esteem.
- **Standards** - Are you comparing yourself to others? This will not help improve your self-esteem. Research shows people who spend too much time on social media are more likely to struggle with low self-esteem because they are constantly comparing themselves to others.
- **Potential** - Have you considered you may not know everything about yourself? Take some time to discover what hidden strengths and passions you might have. Exploring a new hobby, activity, or talent may significantly increase your self-esteem.

ACTION STEPS

- ✓ **Identify negative thinking** - What or who triggers negative thoughts? A difficult coworker? Watching the news? You can't avoid every trigger, but you can start planning how to

respond to them.

- ✓ **Examine your self-talk** - Are your thoughts about yourself based on fact or emotion? Are they rational or irrational? Notice when you downplay the positive and assume the worst.
- ✓ **Challenge yourself** - If you're jumping to conclusions or overgeneralizing, bring yourself back to reality. Over time you can begin to teach yourself to examine the evidence.
- ✓ **Stay positive** - Encourage yourself by focusing on the positive. When mistakes are made, you can learn to forgive yourself. Give yourself credit for good things and even small wins.

KEEP IN MIND

Learning to change how you interpret life takes energy. Taking time every day to care for yourself will help you feel healthy, and when you feel good you are more likely to be positive about yourself and your abilities. When you are positive about yourself, you will have a positive impact on the world around you.

What steps are you prepared to take today to think positively about yourself and your abilities?