

BUILDING SELF-CONFIDENCE

With self-confidence you trust your abilities, feel worthy and accept yourself (including accepting your weaknesses, flaws and mistakes). You'll enjoy life more and worry less about what others think of you. Use the strategies below to develop healthy habits that boost self-confidence.



BE YOUR OWN CHEERLEADER

Use encouraging self-talk to motivate yourself to keep going with difficult tasks, to keep learning new skills, to push yourself to improve. Here are some examples of encouraging self-talk:

- "You have what it takes to achieve your goals"
- "You can do this"
- "You've coped with difficult things before, you can do it again"



DON'T COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHERS

Most people compare themselves to those who are better than them in some way. This makes them feel inadequate. Focus on personal bests, on building your strengths, or on comparing yourself now to an earlier time noticing how you've improved over time.



If you have to, compare yourself to others who are better and worse on the attributes so you get a realistic picture of where you stand.



TURN DOWN THE VOLUME OF YOUR INTERNAL CRITIC

Your inner critic (the voice inside your head that criticises you) destroys your confidence. Notice when your self-talk is critical and replace it with supportive, encouraging self-talk.



Imagine you're talking to a friend and use that same nurturing, supportive tone with yourself.



REMINDE YOURSELF OF PAST SUCCESSES

Record your successes and achievements in a list and when your confidence is low, read it to remind yourself that you can succeed.



Acknowledge how you contributed to the success with effort or skill rather than attributing success to luck or other external factors.



FACE YOUR FEARS

Fear destroys confidence. You can build confidence by gradually exposing yourself to the things you avoid out of fear. Start small and build up to more feared situations.



If you're afraid of being laughed at, deliberately give a wrong answer to a question, wear odd socks or a silly hat! Once you discover that being laughed at is not as bad as you thought it would be (that you can survive it), you'll feel more confident just being yourself.



LEARN FROM MISTAKES AND FAILURES

Life involves trial and error and failure provides opportunities to learn. If you've made a mistake or failed on a task, acknowledge it and learn from it. What worked well? What can you do differently next time?



Have you met anyone who never made a mistake? It's human to make mistakes; no one's perfect so don't be too hard on yourself – you're a work in progress!

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ACCEPT COMPLIMENTS GRACIOUSLY

Instead of batting away compliments (“Oh, that’s nothing”), thank the person for recognising something good about you or your behaviour.



With practice, you’ll increase your comfort with praise from others. You may even learn to praise yourself!



SET GOALS

Set goals, make sure they’re realistic, and take action to achieve them. You’ll develop a perception of yourself as someone who successfully gets things done.



LIST YOUR STRENGTHS

Create a list of your skills. When you learn new skills or think of other things you do well, add them to the list. Think about what other skills you have that you’re not acknowledging.



USE AFFIRMATIONS

Changing critical self-talk doesn’t happen automatically. You have to work hard to replace it with supportive messages (also called affirmations) like “I am enough”, “I am worthy of love” or “I love and accept myself”.



Display affirmations on your mirror or cupboards with post-it notes so you repeat them to yourself every day.



YOUR CONFIDENCE PLAYLIST

Write down the songs that make you feel confident, that help you keep going when things get tough. Add songs to the list that make you feel like dancing.



LEARN NEW SKILLS

Stable, long-lasting confidence comes from many sources. Don’t just base yours on study grades or appearance. As you master new skills, you’ll grow in confidence.