

Low Self-Esteem?

Be kind to yourself, nobody is perfect

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. If you have particularly high self-esteem, you may believe you are a good enough person with a high value, but if your self-esteem is low, you may question whether you are good enough or worthy. Most people will occasionally think less of themselves, if they have not done well at something, or have been criticised. If you feel bad about yourself often, you may stop believing you can achieve your goals, or that people will like you. This can affect your relationships with others and make it difficult to enjoy life.

A lifelong process

Maintaining a healthy and balanced self-esteem is an ongoing process that can help you feel better about yourself, your life, and be confident to try new things and stand up for what you believe.

When you have low self-esteem, it can be like looking through negative glasses at your whole world. It may make you feel that your relationship is not good, or won't last, and that any problems may not be fixable. You may judge other areas of your life negatively too, and it is a bias that can lead to depression and anxiety.

Top tips

- **Think about your positive self**
What have you achieved in life, what are your strengths, what are you proud of, what do you do to feel good about yourself?
- **Balanced self talk**
“There are people who care for me.”
“I am doing the best that I can.”
“I try to do the right thing.”
- **Respect yourself**
It is up to you to respect yourself by keeping healthy, and including activities in your life that you enjoy.
- **Take action**
Help someone or be kind, spend time with someone who likes you, do something you really enjoy, do something you are good at, or treat yourself.

Further help

If you have tried these tips and still feel that low self-esteem is affecting you negatively, get help from a professional, such as a doctor, or counsellor.

More on increasing self-esteem

Think about your factual self

- What are some of the things you have achieved in life (e.g. schooling, skills, work)?
- What are your strengths (e.g. kind, grateful, teamplayer)?
- What are you proud of (e.g. good relationship, home, creative)?
- What do you do that makes you feel good about yourself (e.g. keeping fit, gardening, caring for others)?

Balanced helpful thinking

What you tell yourself about yourself on a daily basis can either build your self-esteem or eat away at it. If your self-talk is constantly negative, and perhaps even insulting, or if you are in an environment where you are frequently told negative things about yourself, over time, you may start to believe that is all there is. Even habitually reprimanding yourself with negative labels when you have done something that hasn't worked out well, can reinforce your negative thoughts about yourself. Give some serious recognition and acknowledgment to the good in you, to the things you do well. Find balanced and authentic statements to build your self-esteem. Some examples are: "I am doing the best that I can"; "I try to do the right thing"; "I am kind to others"; "There are people who care about me"; "I am honest"; "I achieve what I set out to".

Respect yourself

Taking care of yourself can give you confidence and self-respect that is good for increasing your self-esteem. Look after your health through physical exercise, good nutrition, sleeping well, and making sure to de-stress frequently. Include activities that you enjoy, and spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself.

Take action to increase self-esteem

- Being kind to others can boost your self-esteem and remind you that you can make a positive difference and feel good about yourself.
- As much as possible spend time with people who like and support you, and less time with people who are critical and make you feel bad about yourself.
- When you do something you enjoy, it is often something you are good at, and the positive emotions you get can boost your mood and confidence.
- Treating yourself in a positive way can work like a personal hug, a way to say "I like me" which is an excellent self-esteem builder. Some examples that may suit you include taking a long, hot bath, listening to favourite music, reading, having a massage, spending time in your shed or on a hobby.