How to Build Your Confidence

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 Introduction

In the webster’s dictionary, confidence is defined as: “A feeling of trust in one’s ability, qualities and judgement. Words that are associated with self-confidence are, self-assurance, assertiveness, morale, self-reliance, poise. These definitions are certainly valuing and ethics we all should have or aspire to have. However, sadly many of us do not possess this ‘noun” that is important to our growth and belief in one’s self and abilities. It is sad connotation and we will examine as researchers why this phenomenon exists. Why do some people lack this personality trait? Is it a choice or a mandate for some people? What causes this to happen? There are so many questions we can ask and the challenges of examination we will investigate in this research. One may ask themselves the following:

1. Is there a difference between self-esteem and self-confidence?
2. What cause low self-esteem or self-confidence?
3. Can self-confidence be developed and what tools are needed to do so?
4. What is self-confidence about and does self-actualization play a role in this discussion?

There are questions we will examine in this research. The results may surprise you at the end however, the discussion warrants examination. Let's take a look at the origin and the substance at this dilemma to see whether the answers lie in the self-examination of understanding how to build self-confidence and what that may imply. The Latin word for confidence means”

to trust”. Confidence is an ideal that many people do not have. We will explore why and how to overcome such hurdles. The researcher will share a few things and bullet points that will help the person who has small confidence in themselves and how to build it.

How to build confidence in yourself regardless of your age or status in life should be examined first by examining the weakness that propels you not to have confidence and where does this lack come from? Our research finds that from reading the texts, this lack of confidence comes from psychological previous episodes of events or happenings in one’s life that has injected false and conjecture which siphon our confidence and positive reinforcement. In the article, “Building Confidence and Self-Esteem" written by Dr. Neel Burton for the magazine, Psychology Today writes; "Low self-esteem can be deeply rooted in a traumatic childhood such as some sort of traumatic experience such as sexual trauma, emotion al trauma or neglect. We can also equate verbal and psychological abuse from a trusted image or person. He continues to say, “this sense of lack of control may be especially marked in victims of discrimination on the grounds of religion, culture, race, sex or gender discrimination” There are ways to combat low self-esteem, but we must look first at other types of evidence which causes the spiral of self-esteem downward.

The entire modus operandi of the person responsible for lowering one’s self-esteem and confidence is simply to have control over the victim and control them. They use the attack on the victim as a way to overpower them. Bestselling author and spokesperson Napoleon Hill once said, “What the mind can conceive it and believe, it can achieve”. The first step to conquer low self-esteem and building confidence is to first ‘re-vision yourself” What does this mean? It is very toxic to see yourself in the eyes of others. We all are programmed to a certain extent seeing ourselves as others see us. This is a huge mistake because of others expectations (or in this case low expectations) of the victims. The damage that this can cause is not only time consuming for the victim trying to convince others of what they should and can be in the eyes of the ‘controller’ but it is costly, non-effective and damaging to the psychic of the victim. This also can be generational meaning that the victim ‘trusts; the controller so much, they believe this strategy to be right in their eyes with the sole purpose only of ‘pleasing and gratitude’. This creates a ‘personality disorder” of anxiety, it erodes the personality of the victim and his generational influence (children, relatives, employers,). The damage can be catastrophic. The whole intent of the controller is to damage the self-worth of the victim usually based upon some relationship between the two. To damage the self-worth of the victim often is based upon revenge or anger. A few ways of destroying self-confidence are:

* Over –complimenting others you feel are superior to you.
* Excessive apologizing especially when it is not warranted.
* The way you dress gives signals to the controller.
* Being told constantly that everything you say is wrong.
* You see yourself as a loser, having no credible self-value to anything.
* These are anxiety and psychological evidence that something is wrong. Counseling in anxiety disorders and seeking perhaps spiritual counseling might be in order. These emotional issues erode the personality and can be so damaging that many people will consider suicide as a viable option or some sort of self-destructive behavior such as alcohol, drugs, sexual deviancy, and violence. Much of this behavior can be seen in women in abusive relationships. Psychology today defines this behavior as ‘self-worth and self-value issues complicated with anxiety disorders. The dangers of low confidence can be indeed catastrophic if not corrected immediately. This is not to suggest that the other side of the parameter, ‘narcissistic behavior” which is defined as ‘an overtly conceit or a defined mental disorder of self-obsession or egotism”. In this culture and society, we see evidence of this in a growing and evident population that awards beauty, wealth and celebrity status. The ability to compete from the working-class levels with the gap of the super-rich and famous can be alluring. Self-confidence can be and often is antiquated to the value of one’s confidence levels. An interesting aspect of how to build your confidence is within the following bullet points:
* Start with achieving small goals day by day. -This goal aspect helps to build confidence and a sense of accomplishment. Often this is an aspect of building confidence right out of the gate.
* Stay away from negative people- A primary building tool, negative people are toxic to growth. Often, they are people who spread negative thinking because they themselves could not achieve what you already have achieved. Remove them regardless of who they are or their ‘self-serving’ motives.
* Get Things Done- Your success speaks for itself. There will be no need for boasting on your part. Frank Sinatra once said, “When you are successful you won’t have to say a word. Let the music do the talking”. The author strongly suggests watching the film ‘Rocky Balboa’ a testament to being the underdog but having a dream to the end. Another example would be the film, “The Pursuit of Happyness”.
* Listen to Positive Tapes and Read Books of Inspiration- The Bible and its true stories of overcoming is a great start. Read not just for the stories but for the true inspiration and building your faith. That is the true key to success and building confidence. The stories of Job, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Paul Peter, and Solomon I highly recommend.
* Change Your Body Language and Dress-There is an old saying, 'Dress for success, and “dress like the boss”, or “dress like you is already successful” all are antiquated to how you look tells how you feel and how you see yourself.

We live in a society that is 100% visual. People unfortunately believe in what they ‘see’ rather than what they ‘know”. With this point, one should use dressing and acting like you are on your way to success embodies building self-confidence and self-esteem. This is vitally important to follow these bullet points because these are the stepping stones to building confidence. Incidentally, building confidence is contagious much like smiling. The article written by Francis Bridges (Forbes, 2017, July) speaks to important building blocks to build confidence that should be mentioned. She mentions key components that are essential to building confidence.

1. Get Things Done.
2. Monitor Your Progress.
3. Do the Right Thing.
4. Exercise
5. Be Fearless.
6. Stand Up for Yourself.
7. Follow Through.
8. Think Long-Term.
9. Do More of What Makes You Happy.
10. Don’t Care What Others Think.

These are powerful points to follow, many of these points if not all require a consistent change in character and a viable choice of how a person may see himself/ herself. All of these points require a personality change how a person builds self-worth and assertiveness. This may hold the key to alter the circumference of one’s life. So essential is it to build confidence it alters the lifestyle, vision, spiritual direction of one’s life and the effects are tantamount to all affected including siblings, colleagues, family, and associates. It's exactly that powerful and influential. The goal of failure/ learning is to rid oneself of all negative process over with as quickly as possible. However how does one do that? Here is the solution: Whatever the fear is, do small things in that direction. It doesn’t matter how small even if it is keeping a journal or reading about the subject, maybe even finding others who have been successful in that field to talk with them once a week. For example, let’s say it is the fear of skiing or learning how to ski. Purposely fall when you go down the hill, purposely fail to succeed. This enables you not to be afraid to fall (or fail in this case). A person must learn to do a few things in order to understand why one might have low self-esteem and low confidence. The best way the experts suggest to combat this is to do some of the following:

1. Learn how to help others. This is a selfish act in order to help not only the person needing help but your own self-esteem as well.
2. Set Goals. The goals do not and the researcher suggests that those goals are not surmounted However, the goals should be what the researcher defines as ‘baby steps”. Baby steps count. They help one point toward the direction they need to overcome low confidence and low self-esteem.
3. Take Care of Yourself. The culture says ‘health is the new wealth” The researcher conveys this to be a truth fact. Exercise and proper diets offsets and execute endorphins in the brain. This is the body’s opiates, a natural good sense of feeling well and energetic. Jogging, dancing (you don’t have to be that good at it), is very healthy for a good sense of heightened and positive feelings in the body.
4. Challenge bad thoughts about yourself. This is extremely important. It is vital that one replace those negative thoughts with positive thoughts. Perhaps, it may be a great idea to write down things that you are good with and remind yourself of those things. This will reinforce your self-esteem and confidence.

These tools are essential to all of us because at one point in our lives, all of us can relate to having low self-esteem low value of ourselves and low confidence. Usually this may happen based upon the psychosis of an event in one’s life that we all may judge our self-values by those mistakes or negative events. This is a human enigma to judge oneself via the actions or choices we may have made in a single episode or event in our lives. One of the things in the research we have found was it was important to keep visual reminders of things that make you feel good. Learn to ‘accept yourself’ meaning trying new things, accepting your flaws in yourself because we all have them and the researcher shows as an additive that traveling to see different places boosts the immune system, see how others live that may be less fortunate than you are (or more fortunate) to see that humans are all the same. One of the things that is vital to building self-esteem is to surround yourself with positive people who believe and are also headed in the same direction in life that you are. Strengthen relationships and friendships are positive in the long run. One of the major things one must be assertive of is to enhance one’s good points. When one starts to focus upon what that person is very proud of, his or her accomplishments, it sets off feelings of self-appreciation and self-confidence. This pushes your self-esteem to tackle things that you might not have ever considered you could have accomplished. Here are some bullet points one might consider to increase their self-confidence.

* Make a list of your plus (+) points and refer to them in times of distress. We often forget the positives aspects of our personality. This helps to strengthen your plus points and your sense of self-value.
* Positive thinking. Positive thoughts help to enhance your value as an accomplished person and gives you the confidence to achieve and succeed. Try not to allow anyone who is negative or likes to destroy your self-esteem with distraught or low thinking. Offset it with confidence and successful thinking and a better approach to problems.
* Change your attitude by surrounding yourself and if need be changing your environment to a better one. When your mind starts to have flashbacks of what used to be, remind yourself of where you going. Allow yourself to adopt a ‘can do attitude”. This helps to strengthen the way you see yourself and how others see you. That is an important ingredient to growth.
* Acquire self-respect and by accepting responsibility for your actions. This strengthens character and the way you see yourself and how others see you. Bring attention immediately to people who try to disrespect you or diminish your image or respect of yourself. Point it out to them. You don’t need to explain yourself to anyone nor should you feel the need to undercut yourself by putting yourself down in order for someone else to feel good about themselves. If they do not accept you, then that is a person who has identified themselves as not qualifiable to be close to you.
* Look good always! Take pride in your appearance. It does wonders for your self-esteem. Be a great listener. People are attracted to that but within moderation. Do not let people take advantage of that.

Know your value as much as respecting other’s value as long as it is reciprocal. Again, be humble but not to the point that people take advantage of your good nature. If you are a woman, confidence can be an attractive feature and this is synonymous with being a male as well. Just be careful of cockiness or rudeness. That is a complete turn-off for sure. Equal balance is tantamount when it comes to building confidence. So how does this all work? How long does it take to implement these qualities? Does it work for everyone? How do you know it is working if you have been a person of low confidence and low self-esteem? Here are the solutions and the observations the author and the researchers have come to observe and conclude. This is not an easy road and it certainly doesn’t work overnight. It takes practice, lots of it but it can be achieved. There are many examples in history of those from the gospels of biblical history such as Gideon, King Solomon, Peter, Ruth, Mary Magalene, Paul even Jesus and the list is long of those who have overcome surmounting odds. Even in the modern world, we have examples of those with extraordinary confidence. My generations have examples such as Muhammed Ali, Hank Aaron, President Nelson Mandela, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Karen Darke or Kelle Edwards.

All of these people have one singular trait. These heroes and sheroes have extraordinary confidence and they built their confidence by facing enormous challenges and fears. If one follows the clues and footprints of these giants, they will read the evidence of how to build confidence and asset their self-value and self-esteem. It is not impossible.

 Conclusion

As outline in the research the evidence shows clearly how to build one’s self confidence and self-esteem. It does take energy and vision but it can be achieved if one wants to and desires to acclaim such heights. Nothing is impossible in a country and a culture where to succeed takes prowess, energy, time and a plan to activate. Always start out with a plan, stick to that plan and ensure that whatever it is it benefits the culture or a people, it is a model based upon achievement, character and honor and it certainly makes a statement. Success is the key to building confidence. The way to achieve this is to examine how and why, understand what tools will be needed to accomplish the particular tasks, have no fear in doing so and execute the plan step –by-step. Remember that baby steps count when building confidence. The confidence will come automatically when you face the fear that hinders your progress. I am reminded of the story of Daniel facing the giant and killer Goliath. Remember that Daniel had five smooth stones to face Goliath with. It was because Goliath had four (4) other brothers. The key is to plan. The outcome was even though Daniel was the smallest and youngest of his five brothers, he was the least one to fight Goliath. (facing the odds). All in the region feared Goliath (no fear), Goliath on the battlefield made a mockery of the city and the battlefield when he faced David because of David having no battlefield experience and his small stature (being under-estimated).

What was the result?

-Confidence!

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