

Boost Your Self-Esteem and Confidence

By Jill Cascarano

Whether your self-esteem and confidence are still going strong, fading, or have disappeared altogether, it makes sense for all us to nurture these important qualities. Having a healthy sense of self not only helps you prepare for those challenging days but also lets you enjoy happy times. Development from within is vital to being a self-assured and empowered woman.

“Don’t worry about being successful but work toward being significant and the success will naturally follow.” - Oprah Winfrey

Here are some inspiring ways to give your self-esteem and confidence a boost:

Embrace and accept yourself...

- Recognize and embrace your positive qualities. Make a list of all your assets including skills, experiences, physical and social resources, talents, and anything else that makes you feel good about yourself. Add to the list the compliments that others have given you as well. Reminding yourself of all your strengths is a great confidence booster.

- Accept that you are a desirable package rather than any one individual item. Accept that you are not perfect. Don’t let any one particular shortcoming invalidate that you are a multifaceted pleasing package. See the desirable person that you are by taking a picture of yourself with a big smile on your face, and post it on your bathroom mirror. Every time you look at your smile think of all the positive characteristics that define you.

Celebrate your abilities...

- Trust that you are competent. Remind yourself of all the problems you have faced and tackled. Have faith that even if you can’t deal with a problem yourself that you will have the wisdom to get the help, skills, or knowledge that you need. Doubting your capability? Take on a new challenge and prove to yourself you CAN rather than you can’t. Pay attention to each accomplishment regardless of how small and make a mental note or, even better, keep a notebook. Give yourself extra kudos when a task required significant effort and you did it.

- Congratulate yourself. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done and perhaps tell someone close to you. Justified praise is a good boost to morale. Buy yourself a little something periodically, especially if you’ve overcome a hurdle, such as pulling off an important presentation, after your first formal speech, or following a successful meeting. Nothing fancy or expensive, just a small treat celebrating your successes.

Adjust your attitude and view...

- See the glass as half full. Think back to an occasion where you felt like you fell short, made a mistake, or messed up, then force yourself to name three things that went right. We are not defined by any one occurrence but by the accumulation of our experiences. Stay positive and keep it moving.

- Channel nerves and tension positively. When you are nervous, adrenalin is pumped through the body and you feel more keyed up and alert. This extra energy can be used for positive effect. For example, it may enable you to communicate with greater enthusiasm and intensity.

See the desirable you...

- Take a good look at yourself. Pick five things you see on the outside, such as your eyes, hair, nails, legs, or smile. You might pick things related to your style such as your hairdo, clothing, posture, make-up, shoes, or jewelry. Also choose things that come from the inside such as your laugh, spirit, energy, compassion, or kindness. Having trouble? Ask someone who matters to you to name five things you have to feel good about yourself.

“Remember that we are all here on this earth trying to do the best we can with the twists and turns life often brings us. Placate the inner critic by affirming daily that you are a unique and precious being. Strive for greatness, not perfection!” - Heather Tobin, M.A., Intuitive Life Coach, serving the New England area

Take affirmative actions...

- Learn to be more assertive. Stand up for what you believe in, and don’t feel

pressured by others. Ask confidently for what you want and need but always be respectful and kind. You want people to actually hear what you say.

- Believe in your own worth. Recognize that this means making yourself a priority some of the time. Think of something you want to do and do it. Give yourself permission to say no, ask for what you want, or maneuver into a position to make it happen. Be prepared to tolerate sometimes disappointing others for the sake of recognizing that you matter and taking care of yourself.

Rejuvenate and replenish...

- Relax your mind and body. It’s important to allow time for yourself. Make this part of your daily routine to take a few minutes in the morning and evening to be still and decompress. Close your eyes and take calming deep breaths. Let thoughts of serenity wash over you. Try visualizing a beautiful scenic image or recall a tranquil vacation spot that made you feel happy. Imagine the sounds of ocean waves. Listen to nature, such as the birds singing.

“The higher our self-esteem, the more ambitious we tend to be, not necessarily in a career or financial sense, but in terms of what we hope to experience in life – emotionally, intellectually, creatively, and spiritually.” - Nathaniel Branden, Founder of the Branden Institute for Self-Esteem and published author

Jill has always had a passion for both writing and well-being. She has an extensive professional background developing and implementing employer health and wellness programs and writing employee health communications. She possesses an M.A. in Human Resources Management and a B.A. in Communications. She’s currently a student in the Health Coach Training Program at the Institute for Integrative Nutrition. Jill can be reached at: JillCascarano16@comcast.net.

