

Faculty and Employee Assistance Program

NEWSLETTER

Self-Confidence – How We Judge Ourselves

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Self-Confidence – is the expected probability that a person will achieve a goal in a certain situation.

Self-confidence stems from the value that we place on performing well. Our general belief about ourselves has a powerful effect on our self-confidence. Always relative to a task or situation, self-confidence is situational and not absolute.

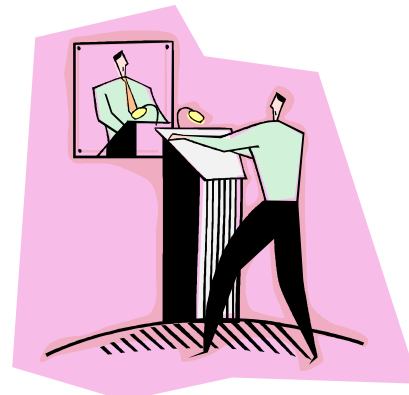
Self-confident people trust their own abilities, have a general sense of control in their lives and believe that, they will be able to do what they wish, plan and expect. Accepting themselves and their limitations, trusting their own abilities, realistic expectations help them to keep a positive attitude. Those who continuously expect perfection may become disillusioned and unable to produce perfect outcomes. Being overly self-critical not only feels terrible, but it is highly unproductive.

When we were children, we valued just being ourselves. We had not yet felt the need to justify our place in the world by proving ourselves to others. As adults, we have become concerned with proving ourselves and, for some, excessive amounts of time are spent thinking ourselves of lesser value than others. Those who feel this way often forget that

no one person is able to do everything perfectly. Each of us have abilities in which we excel and others which are more difficult for us. This should not make us feel un-likeable or less valuable than others.

Self-Defeating Thought Patterns

Devaluing thoughts are a constant. Disaster lurks around every corner. Good outcomes do not count nearly as much as the bad ones. Everyone's opinion other than your own becomes 'gospel'. A compliment becomes a criticism by the time it reaches your ears. Everything is black or white – should have been or was not done. The negative is always the primary consideration.



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Strategies for Developing Self-Confidence

Emphasize Your Strengths – give yourself credit for everything you try. Applaud your efforts.

Take Risks – approach new experiences as opportunities to learn. Do not focus on winning or losing.

Use Encouraging Self-Talk - talk yourself out of expecting perfection and substitute more reasonable expectations. It is perfectly acceptable to try your best, but do not shoot yourself down if the outcome was not perfect.

Self-Evaluate – It is helpful to ask for the opinion of others but learn to evaluate yourself independently. Focus on how you feel; develop your own personal power, thus gaining a stronger sense of self. Watch out for undue criticism, especially your own!

Relive past times when you felt empowered by your situation.

Concentrate on what your purpose in the situation is. The key is to have an aim.

Temporary fluctuations in our feelings of self-confidence are fairly common; they happen to most of us. If, however, your self-confidence is low for a prolonged period of time or your mood shifts quite often, it might be time to seek professional help. It may be that you never really developed a good, solid

concept of yourself as you were growing up and do not now possess a firm, positive concept of yourself to build upon. The mental health professionals in your Faculty and Employee Assistance Program are available to assist you in establishing a positive self-image.



Please give a call to (434) 243-2643 or (800) 847 9355 to schedule an assessment session. A simple telephone call will have you on your way to feeling better about yourself.

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