**SELF-DISCOVERY**

**Self-Esteem -**

**Self-esteem** is the opinion one will have of oneself and his perception on his value as a person. Low (negative) self-esteem can cause people to be negative, lack motivation, and be moody. Those with higher (positive) self-esteem like themselves, so they expect others to like them, too. They don’t harshly judge themselves and are comfortable with which they are.

**Self-confidence**, on the other hand, is your belief in yourself and your abilities. Often, people with high self-esteem also have self-confidence, although this may not always be the case. Both self-esteem and self-confidence can translate to positive human relations because if a person feels good about himself or herself, it is more likely he or she will be more comfortable communicating and working in teams—key components for success.

One will attain self confidence, when one will have:

**1. Actual experience**: When you have accomplished something and succeeded, it is likely you will have the self-confidence to be successful at the task again.

**2. Experiences of others**: If you watch another person perform a task, you may know you can do the same thing.

**3. Social comparison:** When we see others with similar abilities able to perform a task, we may feel more confident in our own abilities to perform the same task.

**4. Social persuasion:.** A boost in self-confidence can come from the encouragement of someone we trust.

**5. Emotional arousal:** This refers to our inner feelings of being adequate or inadequate when it comes to accomplishing a certain task. This can come from negative or positive self-talk.

**6. Self-efficacy**: is the confidence one has to carry out a specific task. Someone may have generally lower self-confidence but have self-efficacy in certain areas of his or her life.

**7. Self-image:** is a bit different than self-esteem in that it means how an individual thinks others view him or her. One’s self-image may not always be in line with what people actually think, but you can imagine the impact this can have on human relations at work.

**Improving Self-Confidence**

Even if our self-confidence needs improvement, the good news is that there are many ways we can improve it. The following are examples:

**Use positive self-talk and visual imagery**. Self-talk refers to the things we tell ourselves in quiet moments. We constantly have an internal dialogue and our subconscious does not know the difference between truth and reality. By focusing on a positive outcome, we begin to believe it, thereby making it more likely to happen. This helps get us mentally ready to perform.

**Take risks**. Risk-taking is an important source of gaining self-confidence. Of course, not all risks work out the way we want them to, but until we take risks, we are unable to accomplish tasks.

**Accomplish**. Accomplishing something is important such as earning a degree or a promotion can help us gain self-confidence. Of course, as mentioned earlier, often it involves risk taking in order to accomplish.

**Know your strengths and weaknesses**. Everyone has a set of things they are good at. Knowing what you are good at and focusing on those things can improve self-esteem. Also, knowing what you are not good at and working to improve those skills can build self-confidence, too.

Everyone can continue working on their self-esteem and self-confidence throughout life. The Johari window is one tool that can help us determine how we see ourselves and how others see us. The Johari window was created in 1955 by JosephyLuft and Harry Ingham. When it was created, the researchers gave people fifty-six adjectives they could use to describe themselves.

Having higher self-esteem and higher self-confidence can improve our projection, meaning we can better accept criticism, learn from our mistakes, and communicate more effectively. This can result in better human relations at work and, ultimately, higher productivity and higher profitability.

**Key Takeaways**

**Self**-**esteem** is defined as the opinion one has about their value as a person. This is different than self-confidence, which refers to the belief someone has in themselves. Both are important determinants to career and human relations success.

**Self-efficacy** is the confidence someone has to carry out a specific task. Self-confidence and self-fficacy can come from a variety of sources.

**Self-image** is how you think others view you, while projection refers to how your self-esteem is reflected in others.

**Exercises:**

1. Write down the five words that describe you the best. When you look at these words, are they positive? If they are not positive, what steps can you take to improve your self-esteem? How will the steps you take improve your human relations skills?
2. Take the self-esteem quiz at http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/3102. What were the results? Do you agree with the results?