

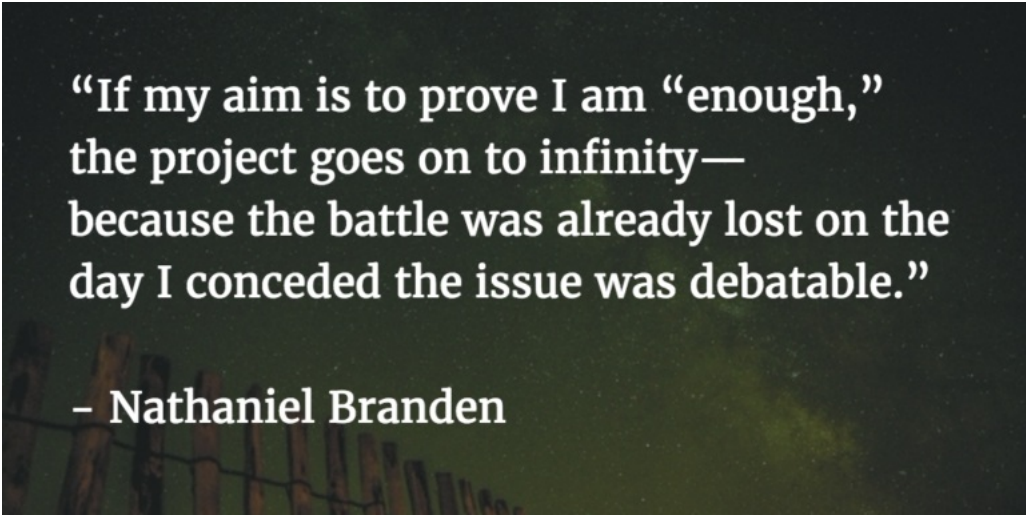
The Six Pillars Of Self-Esteem Summary

 fourminutebooks.com/the-six-pillars-of-self-esteem-summary

1-Sentence-Summary: *The Six Pillars Of Self-Esteem is the definitive piece on one of the most important psychological traits we need to live a happy life, and lays out how you can introduce six practices into your life, to assert your right to be happy and live a fulfilling life.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



“If my aim is to prove I am “enough,”
the project goes on to infinity—
because the battle was already lost on the
day I conceded the issue was debatable.”

– Nathaniel Branden

My friend Paul gave me *The Six Pillars Of Self-Esteem* years ago, and I remember having to read most pages twice. It felt very complicated at the time. The concepts in it are for sure, Nathaniel Branden’s thinking is on a very high and abstract level. Of course you wouldn’t expect anything less from one of Ayn Rand’s most devoted followers (and former lovers, ahem).

Branden devoted his life to the psychology of self-esteem, which culminated in the publication of this book in 1994. He discovered six pillars, which are the foundation on which one can develop a healthy amount of self-esteem, to live a fulfilled life.

Here are 3 lessons from the book:

1. Self-esteem is like calcium: a lack won’t kill you, but you can’t truly live without it.
2. Accept yourself and take full responsibility.
3. Living purposefully and practicing personal integrity are the hardest pillars of self-esteem.

Ready to assert your right to be happy? Time for a pep talk!

Lesson 1: Self-esteem is like calcium: a lack won’t kill you, but you can’t truly live without it.

You can read headlines like “10 Tips to Appear More Confident” or “How to Boost Your Self-Esteem” everywhere, but if I asked you to really explain what self-esteem is, could you do it?

It surely has to be more than the drunken confidence of frat guys trying cheesy pick-up lines on girls, right? Yup!

Nathaniel Branden says self-esteem is **the immune system of consciousness, with the ability to resist, make it strong and regenerate it.**

In a way, self-esteem is like calcium. Calcium is what makes your teeth and bones strong, making it an essential part of a healthy body. While a lack of calcium won't kill you, if you stay depleted over a long time, living a fully engaged life becomes really hard, as your body gets weak.

The same is true for self-esteem and your psychological well-being. Sure, you can navigate through life without it, but you'll always get pushed around and not truly live in accordance with your goals, purposes and values.

This is because self-esteem works like a self-fulfilling prophecy. The more you expect yourself to be capable of, the more these expectations influence your behavior in a way that makes your actions align with them. Therefore, your self-esteem is a way to turn your desires into reality.

Lesson 2: Accept yourself as you are and take responsibility for 100% of the things that happen in your life.

I can't describe all six pillars here, but number 2 and 3 are important. They are **self-acceptance and self-responsibility**, which may be a bit hard to differentiate at first, so let me try.

Self-acceptance is connected to mindfulness. **You choose to value yourself, just the way you are, without practicing judgment.** For example, yesterday I bit my nails very badly. I could get mad at myself and regret this, but if I choose to accept that it happened, I can then ask *why* I bit in the first place. The answer is that I was stressed, because I felt behind on what I wanted to accomplish for the day, and biting my nails was a physical relief for the stress that I created in my head when my expectations didn't match reality.

If you practice self-acceptance and dig deeper, you'll make repeating this bad behavior a lot less likely. A caveat: Self-acceptance shouldn't be confused with complacency. To the contrary. The *only* way to find the drive to get better is to accept yourself as you are now, otherwise you'll waste all of your time agonizing over your past mistakes.

Self-responsibility is a direct result of self-acceptance. It means taking control of your life and happiness by becoming 100% solution-oriented. Don't waste even a second complaining, and **instantly ask “What can I do about it?” whenever a problem arises.** Completely stop blaming others. Nobody's pushing your buttons, no one's actions are a pre-condition for your own and it is nobody's job to make you happy.

It's all you, and that's a good thing!

Lesson 3: Try to live with a purpose and practice personal integrity (it's hard!)

Pillars 5 and 6 are connected as well. The former is about **living purposefully**. Most of us feel like we have a sense of what our purpose is, or at least a rough idea of it. Living with purpose means to try and keep clarifying that purpose as you go along, while simultaneously taking actions that'll move us closer in that direction.

For example, I could say I want to be a writer, but then just "wait until I have a good idea for a novel". Instead, **I just build my skills in the meantime**, by writing for Four Minute Books every time I get a chance. I can figure out an idea for a novel later, at least I'm living in alignment with my purpose.

Taking action is the part that makes sure you complete the sixth pillar, the most difficult of them all: **personal integrity**. It's when **how you behave matches the words you speak**. It starts with keeping small promises and speaking the truth even when a little white lie would be more convenient. This is the hardest one to practice, because our society makes amorality seem normal – being a cynic and exhibiting bad habits is even considered cool these days (drinking, failing at a startup, not caring about your career, etc.).

The fact that you and I are surrounded by plenty of dishonest hypocrites makes it all the more clear and important that we have to be different.

The Six Pillars Of Self-Esteem Review

This summary took forever to write, simply because I didn't know what parts to pick. That's a very good sign. *The Six Pillars Of Self-Esteem* is quite complicated, but the blinks make Branden's abstract concepts easy to understand – a perfect book to read a summary of, highly recommended!

[Read full summary on Blinkist](#)

[Get the book on Amazon](#)

[Learn more about the author](#)

What else can you learn from the blinks?

- How an architect ruined his career due to low self-esteem
- Why self-esteem means putting up a fight
- The three facets of perception and the importance of living consciously
- Why it's incredibly hard to say "I have the right to exist" out loud

- Which two parties shape our self-esteem the most (apart from ourselves)
- Where self-esteem takes an important role outside of our personal lives
- Which 10-minute exercise can improve your self-esteem on a daily basis

Who would I recommend The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem summary to?

The 16 year old, who's being bullied in school, the 39 year old, who's had a screenplay in her head for about 10 years now, and anyone who blames the economy for being broke.