

YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH

Quick tips on how you can
effectively boost your self-esteem
and achieve your full potential



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Introduction

The most important judgment you'll make in your life is the one about yourself. Your self-evaluation will directly and indirectly effect the way you act, react, choose values, set goals, and confront the challenges of life – or not.

Low self-esteem issues are pervasive in our society. I personally have come from a very chaotic and dysfunctional background leaving me to navigate many issues related to low self-esteem. I look at the trail behind me and see how low self-esteem has had an impact on the quality of my life and my ability to reach my fullest potential.

I also can connect the dots in reverse and see how the journey has unfolded from where I started, to where I am today. The journey isn't over, but through much work on myself, I've been able to accomplish many things in my life and feel great about who I am.

You too can move forward from where you are to where you want to be.

This guide was written to serve as a guide, a road map for understanding and awareness of what self-esteem is, the importance it plays in the quality of your life, and how to take actionable steps to improve your self-esteem, thereby improving your life.

You can't make positive changes with anything without first having a clear understanding and awareness of the issue and its causes. These two elements are critical in moving you forward from where you are currently, to where you would like to be regarding your feelings of self-worth, self-love, etc.

Can low self-esteem be improved? Absolutely, but it is a process, ongoing and sometimes lifelong. Once you have the understanding and awareness, it then requires decision and commitment on your part to do the work necessary for improving your self-esteem.

But why is building and being able to maintain high self-esteem so important? High self-esteem makes reality work in your favor. It allows you to approach challenges with confidence and to take real action; you can make positive change. Low self-esteem makes you feel distant, detached, powerless to make decisions about yourself, and you can make choices that limit your growth and development.

That is why, as you read this book and learn more about self-esteem and how it affects the quality of your life, I'm hoping you will be able to make some important decisions in this area of your life. A decision that will serve you well for years to come, and that is to work on improving your self-esteem.

The higher your self-esteem is, the clearer and more confident you will allow yourself to be, and the less dysfunctional you will be. Low self-esteem is also one of the main reasons we tend to sabotage ourselves and our goals and dreams.

Low self-esteem is at the core of so many dysfunctional and self-defeating behaviors and thought patterns we fall into and can sometimes remain trapped in. It is the main reason we make decisions for ourselves that don't serve us. That usually leads us to believe other things about ourselves, like we are not good enough, not capable, that we don't deserve things that others do, that we are not worthy of love, that we are not lovable, that we are stupid, etc.

Your ultimate goal is to feeling great in your own skin and enjoy living your life, on your terms. You can do it! So, let's get started.

Chapter 1. What Is Self-Esteem?

Self-esteem refers to the image we have of ourselves in regard to how much value we place on our lives. And developing self-esteem is about respecting ourselves, believing in our own worth, and building the capacity to feel “good enough” just as we are, regardless of what happens in our lives. Self-esteem plays a big role in determining how we will navigate life’s challenges—it allows us to either feel happy and fulfilled or sad and empty across the different situations in our lives. Self-esteem isn’t about being perfect or about having the approval of others around us. Rather, it’s about accepting yourself the way you are and maintaining an intrinsic belief that you are a good and worthy person simply because you exist as a human.

Intrinsic self-worth can be a tricky concept to wrap your brain around. It may be something you’ve never really considered; it might tap into personal and existential belief systems, or it may seem plain foreign due to years of struggles with poor self-esteem. Rather than debate the basis or validity of internal worth, I invite you to step back from any doubt or blocking beliefs that prohibit you from accepting your own sense of self-worth. Think of how you might view a new baby, a child, or a close friend. Chances are, you would easily be able to see their value, yet when self-esteem is low, it may be difficult for you to believe you possess that same level of fundamental worth.

When our self-esteem is low, we develop a tendency to measure ourselves with more severe standards than we do with the rest of the world. As you work through this book, challenge yourself to let go of any resistance and simply trust that you, too, have inherent worth. When you put aside your reservations, you will be better able to commit to utilizing the recommended steps and tools to build self-esteem. As your self-esteem begins to improve, you will find the veil that prevented you from believing in your own worth has lifted.

What Affects Self-Esteem

Listed below are the top six things that scientists believe affect self-esteem (both negatively and positively). It's important to take note that these may not all apply to you. Everyone is different and trying to compare your life experiences and self-esteem to someone else's is an almost guaranteed way to lower your self-confidence and sabotage your plan to start believing in yourself.

How You Were Raised

The way we were raised as kids has one of the largest impacts on our self-esteem. As toddlers, young kids, and teenagers, we're very vulnerable to the support and lifestyle of the people around us. Take a kid and put them into a household where they're forced to fight for food and work for 16 hours a day to get by, and you'll see how they may not feel like they're worth all that much.

On the other hand, if you were to place a child into a home that has two loving parents who want the best for their kids while still letting them live their best lives, you may observe that this person has a higher self-esteem and believes in their abilities a little more than the other, less-advantaged kid.

When we're growing up, positive reinforcement and praise are essential. Because we are so vulnerable at such a young age, our sense of belonging and love begin to act as the foundation for our future selves. This is why numerous scientists suggest that human interaction and affection (such as hugs, friendly kisses, or "vent-sessions") are some of the most important building blocks when developing a child's self-esteem and sense of worth.

The People You Surround Yourself With

A large chunk of how you feel about yourself comes from the people you're with during your day-to-day activities. The way people interact with you, the way you

interact with them, and the connections you have with these people will determine how you may view yourself.

Think about it this way: if you're constantly surrounded by people who help you through your rough patches, make sure you're okay, and celebrate your biggest accomplishments, how do you think you'd feel? Now imagine you're surrounded by people who only seem to talk to you because they feel like it's an obligation and don't really care about what you're saying. Or maybe they're only free when it benefits them, and they don't ever seem to make room for you in their daily schedules. How do you think you'd feel in that scenario?

Odds are, the first one would make you feel like you're worthy and more confident in your abilities to be around others. You're surrounded by people who genuinely care and are okay with seeing the darker side of you. In a sense, they are validating your existence. The second scenario, on the other hand, may have you questioning your connections with such individuals. "Why don't they like me?" "Why don't they make time for me?" "What am I doing wrong that is making them not want to be around me?" These are the kind of things that we tend to ask ourselves in one-way relationships. Over time, the same questions will start to have a negative impact on our self-esteem and confidence.

Your Personality

In some cases, your self-esteem may be the direct result of your personality. Understanding who you are at the core may help you see how you just may be someone with low self-esteem.

A good example of this is the perfectionists. These are the kinds of people who need to do everything perfectly and won't stop until they're 100% satisfied with the end result. While it can have its advantages, it can also have a plethora of negative drawbacks.

When a perfectionist completes a task, it is rare for them to say, “This is perfect” because perfection is nearly impossible in the real world. Still, they will always find a flaw in their work and highlight it while showing little regard for the quality of the work they actually did. They’ll begin to ask themselves, “Why couldn’t I do this better?” “How could I not notice this ‘huge’ flaw?” “What is the point of working on projects like this if I can’t even get it right?”

Similar to how someone’s self-esteem may suffer around a negative group of people, a perfectionist will suffer from their negative outlook on life and the numerous projects they’ve accomplished.

Your Hobbies

In some cases, your hobbies might be causing a decline in your self-esteem and self-confidence. While this isn’t usually the case for more relaxed and internal hobbies (like making models, drawing, or playing an instrument for fun), it can be a huge hit to your self-esteem when it comes to more ‘flashy’ hobbies, especially during the beginning stages.

An example of this could be dancing. Assume you’ve never gone dancing before, but you’ve always dreamed of it. You go to a dance club, sign up, and get put into a class with 20 other people. They all seem like they’re exactly in sync with each other, but you can hardly get your timing right. You miss a step here, lose a beat there, and suddenly you stick out like a sore thumb.

This sense of “not fitting in” can be a powerful one and can often have a hefty impact on your self-esteem, especially when this hobby is one that you’re enthusiastic about and really want to immerse yourself into. You can start to lose motivation and confidence over time and then you will eventually quit and never return to it again.

On the other hand, going out there and trying a new hobby can have a positive effect on your self-esteem if you remain positive about the whole experience. For

example, maybe you can't get the beat right, but you've noticed that you're getting more fluid with the actual dance moves, and they're starting to come more naturally to you. Compare where you are now to where you began when you started, and you'd see that you're improving.

Realizing that you're getting better at something you love can boost your motivation to continue the hobby, increase your self-esteem, and make you feel more confident in your ability to learn new things. It can even carry on into new hobbies that introduce you to a whole new community of people who are ready to help you improve yourself one step at a time.

Your Position in Life

Where you are in life (may it be financially, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, or even physically) can have a large impact on your self-esteem. More specifically, how you view your position in life can change the way you're feeling and alter your self-confidence.

Take someone who is going through a really rough time. Maybe they have lost their job or house or been dealing with a rough divorce. They can either see it as the worst thing in the world or an opportunity to learn something new and start fresh.

Imagine this person saying to themselves, "I lost my job, but that's okay because I know this is an opportunity to start somewhere new and fill in all the holes I had at my old job." It's easy to see how this positive view of the whole situation can bring about positive change inside the person. Now, imagine that same person saying, "I lost my job, which means I'll have no money, which means I'll have to sell everything to cover all of my debts. This is the worst thing in the world." Do you see how our perception of where we are in life can change the way we feel about ourselves?

Stuff like this happens all the time; that's just the way life is. However, how we react to these problems will often determine how we end up feeling about ourselves.

Significant Life Events

There are plenty of life events that can alter our self-esteem, for better or for worse. When a positive event happens, such as a kid's graduation, your wedding, or your 50th anniversary with the love of your life, we begin to feel more confident about ourselves. A kid's graduation tells us that we're good at raising children; a wedding tells us that we're lovable enough for someone to want to spend the rest of their lives with us; and the 50th anniversary tells us that we've been worth someone's love for the majority of your/their life.

Nevertheless, life events can also swing the other direction. When negative situations happen, such as a suicide in the family, a divorce with a loved one, or a child suddenly leaving the house and choosing not to talk to you, we begin to question our worth. Our confidence seems to dwindle as well. The suicide makes it appear like we didn't care enough for someone; the divorce tells us that we're not lovable; and the kid suddenly leaving home and cutting all ties with you implies that we failed as parents and ruined our kid's life. This is where blame starts to set in, and a vicious cycle of self-blame and self-hatred begins.

These life events aren't always avoidable, but they can help us understand why we are feeling a certain way and may push us to find ways to improve those feelings.

The things mentioned above are just six of the almost infinite number of factors that affect your self-esteem and alter how you view and believe in yourself. However, they are usually credited as some of the biggest contributing factors to your self-esteem and may help you realize why you're feeling a certain way. Remember, the first step to solving some of the issues in your life is identifying them.

Chapter 2. How Self-Esteem Changes by Age

Life is kind of like a rollercoaster; our hormones and perception of the world change drastically. When we're younger, we were usually too ignorant to see the darkness in the world and often found ourselves in a positive light. When we're older, we have experienced enough of life to know that things just happen sometimes, and we see ourselves based on what kind of experiences we've had in the past.

Below are some of the changes to your self-esteem that you may notice as you pass through the various stages of your life.

Newborns (Ages 0-3)

In the beginning, we have no perception of self-worth and don't understand what self-esteem is. This stage is very important in terms of developing that strong sense of self-worth in the future, however. This is where human interaction is vital and should be the foundation for most relationships.

Children (Ages 4-10)

As we slowly develop our sense of belonging and figure out who we are, we tend to identify how we feel about ourselves bit by bit. Children around the age of 4 will usually see themselves in a pretty positive light. With the proper amount of interaction and praise, they will be able to carry this positive sense of self-esteem into their preteen years.

When kids start approaching 10 years old, it is possible that puberty may begin to set in for "early bloomers." While it will not severely alter who they are for a couple of years, it will begin to change how they may view themselves. Blooming early can possibly give a boost in self-confidence and improve a child's image of themselves when they start to notice the physical attributes that are usually associated with puberty (e.g., enlarged breasts, larger muscles, and change in genital structure).

On the other hand, some children may see their classmates or friends blooming before they do. While it doesn't bother all kids, it can have a negative impact on many. This situation may cause them to wonder if something's wrong or make them feel as if they are not cool or "grown up" because they aren't seeing the same changes.

Remember, a lot of kids want to grow up and don't see the beauty in childhood. When changes that accompany puberty start to take effect, they will create and feel the weight of this social requirement to grow up as fast as the earliest bloomer.

Preteens (Ages 11-12)

This is when most people start to see the effects of puberty take charge. Their bodies will begin to produce all kinds of new hormones that can put their mood all over the place and cause them to overreact at a lot of issues that, in reality, aren't that bad.

Seeing as the hormones may cloud their emotions, their self-esteem may take a hit. They may begin to feel like no one understands them and they just want to run away to their rooms every night so that they can avoid the tedious day-to-day tasks, such as going to school, doing homework, or keeping their social life alive.

Teens (Ages 13-19)

In the early stages of someone's teenage years, their hormones are only going to get more and more intense as they dig deeper into puberty. They will notice large changes in their bodies, as well as have a higher sex drive and an attraction to the opposite sex for the first time in their lives. The teens also enter that rebellious phase and do everything to spite their parents.

As teenagers get older and start to approach their adult years, their hormones should relax a little, and they should start to become more grounded and in-touch with reality. At this point, their self-esteem is a product of their life's experiences. A troubled childhood that was full of bullying and neglectful parents, for instance, might cause them to have a poor sense of self-worth. This will prove to be troublesome when

they go to apply for jobs or schools or try to hold on to a romantic relationship. Conversely, things would have been different if they had an excellent time and peaked in high school, resulting in high self-esteem.

While this period can be very exciting, someone's self-esteem can fly both directions. It is hard to pinpoint exactly what a teenager will be feeling because, as mentioned before, everyone is different when it comes to handling life experiences.

Adults (Ages 20-60)

At this stage of life, people's self-esteem will be almost 100% influenced by their life choices and experiences. When someone is in their 20s and 30s, they will most likely have an increased sense of self-worth as they deal with big events that accompany adulthood, such as getting married, buying a house, beginning a career, finishing school, and becoming parents. However, some of them can be lonely around these ages as well. If a person has had low self-esteem since childhood and have been struggling with issues like loneliness since teenage years, they may find themselves lagging behind everyone else. They may struggle to find a significant other, make friends, or stay in touch with people who mean a lot to them. If not improved, low self-esteem at this age can lead to major future complications, such as depression, loneliness, and anxiety.

In the 40s and 50s, it is easy for someone's self-esteem to start declining. Their kids will begin to move out, their marriage may start to lose the fire it had when they were in their 20s, their friends may fall out of touch, and older family members will start to pass away and put an emotional strain on their heart and mind. When children start to make decisions without their parents, the latter may feel like they are no longer needed by their kids and start to feel purposeless. When their marriage starts to decline and friends stop calling, it may make people feel like they aren't worthy of love.

Furthermore, people in their 40s and 50s feel as if they're running out of time or wasting their lives. Thus, they begin to chase the feelings they had when they were younger. This is usually when we start to see people going through midlife crisis.

Seniors (Ages 61+)

In the 60s, self-esteem tends to increase. This is when kids start to get married. You may also think of retirement and get to do all of the things you've been looking forward to for a while, such as travelling or buying a cottage. On top of everything, there's the added prospect that they will become grandparents and get to redo all the best parts of being a parent all over again. At this point, the seniors are beginning to come to terms with the hardships they've faced and are deciding to live the rest of their days happily.

In some cases, people in their senior years will go through a second midlife crisis after they realize that they are quickly running out of time to do everything they want. If they dwell on all of the things they haven't done up until this point, though, their sense of self-worth may decline, and they may fall into a deep depression.

In the later senior years (80+), people may feel lonely as their spouses begin to pass away and lose lots of friends. This is unavoidable and, without a proper support system, people will begin to feel worthless. As a result, their health tends to suffer, and they run the risk of passing away earlier than expected. This is, once again, why human interaction at all stages of life is very important.

Chapter 3. How Low Self-Esteem Can Affect Your Life

Your level of self-esteem can bring on a number of changes to your life, both negative and positive. This section in the chapter will look at how high and low self-esteem can affect your life, relationships, work, as well as who you are as a person.

High Self-Esteem

The goal is to have high self-esteem. People with this trait usually demonstrate high levels of self-confidence and don't put much thought into what others think of them. After all, they know what they want, who they want to be, and where they want to be, and then they get themselves there. Having high self-esteem can have a number of benefits to it, some of which include:

Being Yourself

When you have high self-esteem, you really don't care what others think of you. You embody the phrase "do what makes you happy" and won't change that for the world. You wear what you want, wherever you want, and in front of whoever you want. Being able to be yourself promotes healthy friendships, loyal relationships, and an overall happier view of life. This is something that people with low self-esteem struggle with.

Not Being Afraid to Be Wrong

One thing that people with high self-esteem are great at doing is taking criticism and not being afraid to be wrong. When you have low self-esteem, you're constantly thinking about what others think about or how they may react to something you're about to say or do. Because of this, you either don't say it out of fear of being ridiculed and made fun of or do it and assume that everyone is quietly judging you. With high self-esteem, however, you know that you won't know how people react if you never say anything. If they do make fun of you, oh well — everyone is wrong sometimes.

Being Able to Take on New Challenges

People with high self-esteem are more confident in their abilities. If they aren't sure how to do something, they won't hesitate to learn how to do it and give the task their all. Being able to take those scary first steps when taking on a new challenge is what really separates someone with high self-esteem from someone with lower self-esteem.

Someone with low self-esteem will usually overthink the challenge and look at it from every negative angle to see if it is even worth it (it normally isn't). They assume the worst-case scenario or talk themselves out of it by claiming that they "can't do it" or "don't have the skills to do it."

Being able to take on new challenges will help you improve yourself, grow, and mature. If you find that it's not for you, don't worry; at least you gave it a shot.

Not Constantly Seeking Approval

The beauty of having high self-esteem is that you're content with who you are and don't need to go out and seek constant approval from friends, family, and strangers alike. Instead of looking at people and hoping they approve of you, you know that they do and genuinely enjoy having them in your life.

People with low self-esteem will often find themselves going out of their way to get the attention of anyone. They need to seek constant validation from others because they know they can't find it within themselves like others with high self-esteem do. This need for constant approval can lead to people developing unhealthy, manipulative relationships, emotionless sex, and severe feelings of loneliness.

Not Needing to Be Perfect

This benefit kind of goes hand-in-hand with all of the other points that were outlined in this short list. The great thing about having high self-esteem is not needing to be perfect all the time. If something goes wrong, you learn from it and brush off the

consequences fairly quickly. You don't like to hold grudges and understand that there's a flaw in everyone and everything, no matter what.

People with low self-esteem often find that they need to be constantly improving themselves because something is always wrong. If they see some fat on their stomach, they'll stop eating because they "need to lose weight." (While this is more of an extreme example, it is the same principle.)

All in all, having high self-esteem can open the doors for opportunities you would've never expected. You'll notice you make friends easier, talk to others with ease, connect quicker with strangers, and live a life you want to live. You'll notice that things like landing a job, excelling in your career, or accomplishing your goals will become easier over time.

Low Self-Esteem

In a perfect world, no one would have self-esteem issues, and we'd all work together to help each other out. Unfortunately, this isn't the reality of the situation. Millions of people around the world suffer from it and have paid the price. Low self-esteem, after all, leads people to ruin relationships, let go of opportunities of a lifetime, and miss out on successes that would have otherwise been achievable. To better illustrate some of these downfalls, below are five simple disadvantages to having low self-esteem.

Chapter 4. Causes of Low Self-Esteem

Having low self-esteem, self-worth, and a negative self-image forms from many different experiences, mental images you repeat in your mind, and what you're constantly saying to yourself. There was something in your early childhood that happened to you.

This made you believe that you weren't "good enough" and that you didn't deserve to be regarded by others because honestly, at the time, you didn't even respect yourself. This single experience might have been the vicious building-block that created your low self-esteem. Every time you wanted to do something, that experience would pop into your head, and you would affirm that you shouldn't do this thing because that experience may happen again. It's an ugly cycle that we can overcome together.

Here's a list of the most common reason you have low self-esteem. Try to see what area feels most right to you. Just go off of your intuitive feelings. Whatever area pops into your head first, is likely the one that caused you the most trouble.

1. Unsupportive Parents/Guardians/Family Members:

There're a million reasons as to why your parents raised you into the person you are today. You parents might not have been around, they might have put too much pressure on you and were disappointed in your actions. They may have been "over-suffocating" you when you wanted more space and freedom. Wherever the reason is, if your parents taught you to give up on yourself and your dreams, you'll likely have low self-esteem. You visualize that you don't matter or that you can't do anything important.

Similarly, if your family members constantly put you down and made fun of the things that made you happy (and still make you happy to this day), you tend to believe

that there's something wrong with you and that you're not "good enough" for them to love you.

2. Abuse:

Abuse isn't always physical, it's also emotional and verbal abuse. If someone constantly belittled you in a mean, sarcastic, and hurtful way in front of any other person, you might have a hard time in trusting or loving others. When you think about people who love you, you might see their actions in a negative tone. You're constantly looking for people who are mean or who you can't trust.

3. Slaving Away Unnecessarily:

If you're depriving yourself of some personal, rightful dream because you're working a job that makes you miserable, you'll likely have a hard time trusting your life choices. You feel sort of trapped, unable to really find a passion or a "ticket" for your life. You think that since you're working a "boring" job, it must mean that there's something wrong with you.

4. Unrealistic Goals:

Having unreasonable goals or putting unreasonable pressure on yourself to achieve goals you know you won't do (and at the same time, hurting yourself when you fail) can cause long term damage to yourself. If you break your goals into sections, you'll be able to feel like you're making progress in places that you succeed, which will make it easier for you to show yourself that there is a possibility that you can reach your goals.

5. Negative Thoughts of Yourself:

One of the ways that low self-esteem forms is through your thoughts. Negative thoughts can pop up at any time giving you slightly hidden facial expressions on the

inside. Your negative thoughts are telling you that “guess what? You’re not worth being loved!”, or “I’m no good!”, or “I’m not good enough for this!”, etc.

Listening to these thoughts can affect your life in a major way. Negative thoughts lead to negative actions. The more you concentrate on these thoughts, the more you’ll be compelled to act in a negative, critical manner. To counteract this, you’ll want to concentrate on really great things. Think about your personal passions, things you truly enjoy, and people that love you.

6. Existence Of “Ideal Body Type”:

As we grow up, we are too concerned with how we compare to others physically. That is, that what it “should be like” in terms of weight, height, eye color, facial structure, etc. The exaggerated body type of what is beautiful, thin, long-haired, small, etc. can make us feel like we’re not “good enough”. Though, what is beautiful is different for every person, you don’t have to be thin, or have long hair, or have a certain color. If you’re comfortable with your body type, then you don’t have to worry about what others think of you. This will help you determine your true worth.

7. Peer Pressure:

We all wish to be accepted by others. Without realizing, we sometimes attempt to do things like drugs, drinking, and smoking because we may want to “fit in” and be seen as “cool” or “cute”. The more you do this, the more you’re telling yourself that not fitting in and seeming “uncool” is a big problem. Don’t do things that you don’t enjoy doing. It’s OK being different from everyone else. It doesn’t mean you’re weird. You can be in a group of people and still be yourself. You don’t have to be a part of a crowd to be a part of a group. Plenty of people would love to try new things and aren’t afraid to be themselves. Peer pressure won’t last forever, you’ll eventually get out of it.

8. Poor Treatment of Your Partner:

When your partner treats you poorly, you feel as though you're not worth loving. You think, "I'm not worthy of love. I'm not good enough. I can't trust anyone." This is a fear that you're going to lose your self-esteem. You may not take those feelings too seriously, but throwing away a good relationship with someone you love because of those feelings can destroy a future relationship. If your partner is only giving you one-third of their attention, you'll be more likely to treat them like they matter.

9. Stressful Life Events:

Another cause of low self-esteem is when you encounter a stressful life event like your parents getting divorced, getting an incurable disease, break-ups, financial trouble, getting fired from work, or someone close to you die. Stressful events such as these make us feel as though we'll never be able to be happy again.

These types of events create a chain reaction of thoughts and emotions that can lead to low self-esteem. Such as "I'll never be able to love anyone again," "I don't matter or I can't do anything of importance," "If I ever do something of importance, the people who matter will leave me anyway," and so on.

10. Being in A Negative Environment:

If you're stuck in a situation that's always negative and no positive, then you'll likely believe that there's something wrong with you. You can't trust or believe in yourself in this environment, and no matter how hard you try, you'll always be in a negative and destructive place in your life.

This is not a bad thing. It is natural to feel bad about yourself when you're stuck in a negative environment. It is OK to only do things that you really enjoy. You don't have to listen to people who are negative, but it also doesn't mean you should avoid negative people. Being around them can help you realize that you're not alone, but might not be the best of friends.

Chapter 5. Signs of Low Self-Esteem

People who live with low self-esteem usually develop it years before they realize what is going on. Some may still be struggling from problems they had in their adolescence. Other people may begin struggling with their self-esteem in adulthood, as they try to build a life that they can appreciate. Regardless of when feelings of low self-esteem begin, the first step is identifying that you are struggling. Here are some of the most common signs of low self-esteem:

1. Poor Confidence:

When you have low self-esteem, you have little confidence in your ability to succeed. It is difficult to imagine being successful without being badgered by low self-esteem. Instead, you are convinced that you are not good enough to accomplish your goals.

2. Lack of Control:

It is normal to feel a lack of control in a situation when you feel low self-esteem. This is not a deliberate attempt to cause stress, but a natural response from deep inside you. We all experience a lack of control from time to time. This does not mean that you are a weak person. Sometimes you want to walk away from a situation that feels uncomfortable for you, but you may also feel that you have no real choice. This makes you feel helpless and useless.

3. Negative Social Comparison:

With low self-esteem, you usually become very critical of yourself and others. You automatically compare your failures and shortcomings to other people and the way they do things. Rather than seeing the good things in your life, you see the bad. You may obsess with why you can't do the things that other people do so easily. People with low self-esteem sometimes believe that they lack what people with high self-esteem have naturally.

4. Problems Asking for What You Need:

If you have low self-esteem, then you may feel that need to hide your real circumstances from people close to you. You worry that people will not be supportive, if they learn how, you are really struggling. You may feel that they will judge you. If you have friends, then you would rather pretend your life is perfect, than actually be honest with them. When you are not being honest with others, this can cause problems.

5. Worry and Self-Doubt:

If you have low self-esteem, then you may find that you spend a lot of time worrying and doubting yourself. Do you always assume that something bad is going to happen and you don't want to be blamed for it? Then you might consider changing your outlook. Remember, you can't always control everything. You will still make mistakes, but don't attach the mistake to your identity.

6. Trouble Accepting Positive Feedback:

When people tell you that you are doing well, it is usually more difficult for you to accept positive feedback than people with high self-esteem. When someone compliments you, you tend to negate their feelings with feelings of doubt about yourself. You may think that you are not good enough to deserve any praise. This can be frustrating if you feel this way, but it actually holds you back. It is better to accept the praise and build on it.

7. Negative Self-Talk:

If you don't think that you are good, then you probably talk to yourself the same way. You may find yourself saying, "I can't do it, I can't do it." You tell yourself that you are not worthy of having something happen, because you are not good enough. People with low self-esteem often yearn for more, but they are too busy trying to make themselves feel better, instead of making their circumstances better. Your negativity must be broken before you can be successful.

8. Fear of Failure:

Do you dwell on the possibility that you may fail in the future? If you do, then you may feel that success in life is impossible for you. You are not sure that you can accomplish your goals, because you are afraid to fail in front of people. You may even make excuses for future failure, before you have even attempted to succeed.

9. Lack of Boundaries:

A person with low self-esteem might be attracted to aggressive people. When they are aggressive toward you, it may be difficult for you to keep your own thoughts and opinions to yourself. If you are around people who are constantly criticizing you, you might feel that you need to be on your guard. You may even accept abuse from others, because you don't think that you deserve any better.

10. Trying to Please Others:

Trying to please your family can cause problems, as you feel inadequate as an adult. You may try to make the family happy, as you feel that you deserve no better. You might even feel that you should be viewed as a disappointment if you don't fit into the family's plans and dreams. Whatever the reason, your attempts to stay close to people will be stressful, as you feel that you must please others. Life is difficult enough as it is. You should strive to please yourself and only you.

If you recognized at least 3 of the behaviors above, you may struggle with self-esteem. You can also consider your overall feelings about yourself. If you feel confident in yourself and feel that you have a purpose, then you probably have good self-esteem. However, if you are unsure of your purpose in life, you might be struggling with self-love.

Chapter 6. Benefits of Overcoming Low Self-Esteem

Your self-esteem is the reactor core or energy source of your personality. A person's level of self-esteem determines levels of enthusiasm, vitality and personal magnetism. People with high self-esteem are positive, friendlier and more effective in every part of their lives. Everything you do, think or say will affect your self-esteem. Therefore, your goal is to keep your self-esteem high and positive on an ongoing basis.

Overcoming low self-esteem, you'll have the freedom and courage to do the following;

1. To conquer shyness, fear, develop boldness and spontaneity.
2. To experience an increase in self-respect and respect-others.
3. To create greater enthusiasm for living.
4. To be motivated toward goal achievement, leadership, and service.
5. To meet new people and make new friends.
6. To develop greater creativity.
7. To be happier and more fulfilled.
8. To improve self-understanding and self-confidence.
9. To increase emotional stability and self-reliance.
10. To be more independent and self-supportive.
11. To become more patient, accept things as they are, and make the most out of every situation.
12. To develop greater patience, tolerance, and forgiveness.
13. To acquire a higher understanding of life and life's purpose.
14. To become more realistic about money and material possessions.

15. To avoid becoming a victim of circumstance, be a humane and considerate person, and have a greater appreciation of the world and the universe.

You can have the freedom to do whatever you want! It is very important that we build high self-esteem since it gives us more confidence to face life. Having a high self-esteem make you more optimistic about life and drives you toward achieving your goals. A person with low self-esteem generally feels inferior and may not perform well under different circumstances. These people may have grown to believe that they have to put off their needs to please other people. This train of thought can lead to depression, anxiety, and physical illness. People with low self-esteem don't get regular check-ups, exercise, or take care of their personal needs because they really don't think they are worthy of taking the time of other people with these "trivial" problems.

People who suffer from low self-esteem also tend to remain in violent relationships because they feel that they deserve nothing better. Furthermore, if they have children, they cannot impose respect and set limits because they feel unworthy of the respect that parents need. Don't forget that low self-esteem is also the main cause of broken relationships. Having a healthy self-esteem invites more joy and happiness into your life.

Self-esteem is what inspires success and also helps achieve it. It is self-esteem, or the positive subjective evaluation of your own self, that encourages and motivates you to set short-term and long-term goals, and also steers you to achieve them. In the absence of self-esteem, which usually begins with the negation of one's imperfections, you're less likely to have ambitions in life, and even less so to take the necessary steps towards achieving them. Fear of failure, as mentioned earlier, would prevent you from initiating the process of accomplishing your goals even if you've somehow gathered the courage to set them.

Let's understand this by considering one small example. When your boss briefed you about the new project, he wanted you to undertake, every aspect was beautifully clear in your head. You could, in fact, visualize yourself successfully delivering on every facet of it – so deep was your understanding of it. Unfortunately, your boss could not read your thoughts and could only see your confused expression – stemming from your overall lack of confidence, as reflected in your poor body language. And so, he decided to hand over the project, then and there, to your junior, much to your chagrin. The result: you left your boss' chamber with even less self-esteem than you had entered it with.

Now that is the kind of thing that lack of self-esteem can do to you. It can deprive you of even the smallest vestige of confidence in your own capability to deliver on your goals and ambitions. And as a result, it can leave you completely bereft of the acceptance of your intrinsic strengths. Self-esteem, in other words, is the recognition of your own inherent potential, which often remains unidentified and unexploited. It is a persistent and consistent acknowledgement of your own ability not just to set far-reaching goals but also to fulfil them.

While this may seem contrary to the initial assumption we had set out with – that is the need to acknowledge your weaknesses, it is actually an echo of the same. Because once you start introspecting to identify your imperfections, you will naturally start looking at, and accepting, your strengths too.

Absence of self-esteem often prevents a person from aspiring for higher echelons of happiness and success, since people who don't have self-esteem, or enough of it, don't believe themselves to be capable of achieving their aspirations. It's a showcase of all that's lacking in an individual's personality – encompassing the entire gamut of his weaknesses and imperfections, either as perceived by himself or as seen by others.

More often than not, this prevents them from even striving to aspire. And even if such people do aspire for success, they're less like to achieve it than those with higher self-

esteem. That's because people with little self-esteem lack the motivation that steers their journey towards the achievement of their goals. They tend to give up even before starting on the odyssey to accomplish their ambitions and targets. They, for reasons they're unable to explain even to themselves, fail to recognize their own potentialities and capabilities.

Self-esteem, thus, is the key differentiator that distinguishes a successful person from an unsuccessful one. Self-esteem will lend you the courage to move relentlessly forward, towards the achievement of your goals. It will also empower you with the resilience to tackle all challenges in the way of your journey towards the accomplishment of your goals. Self-esteem, in fact, influences a person's decisions and choices when faced with a situation that demands taking a stand. A person lacking in self-esteem, and unaware of his own imperfections, is unable to make a reasoned choice or take an informed decision in such circumstances. He's simply unable to decide which option he should go for, mainly on account of his own fear of failure. A confident person, on the other hand, is willing to take a risk either way, since he's cognizant of his ability to succeed whichever choice, he makes.

The problem with most of us is that while we do acknowledge and understand the importance of self-esteem in our lives, we find ourselves unable to imbue it in our psyche. Before you try to find ways of developing self-esteem, please remember that it's not going to happen overnight. While it's good to dream and think big, you need to begin with small steps, taking one baby step at a time.

So, start by setting small goals for yourself as you embark on the mission to become an assertive and self-confident individual, who believes in his own ability to succeed in any venture, even one as complex as building self-esteem. Look at self-esteem as a thing you cherish and value. It could be your house or car, or even your family. If you love your house, car or family, you're probably doing all you can to take good care of it. Even if you're tired at the end of a hard day in office, you'll find time to

spend time with your family if you truly love them. Building self-esteem requires a somewhat similar approach. It involves loving and respecting yourself, and taking pride in your existence. Once you do that, you'll make all possible effort to take good care of yourself. This may involve physical care (grooming etc.) or mental and intellectual care (finding time to read books etc.).

We all need self-esteem, so start by accepting that you also need self-esteem, and having self-esteem will make you a better human being, not just in your own eyes but also in the eyes of the world.

Chapter 7. Tips to Boost Low Self-Esteem

Growing your self-esteem simply means starting to love yourself more. As you increase your self-love, it will become easier to strive for your goals. You'll find that you are prepared to do the things it takes to lead a healthier, better life and be a better you. This part will go over strategies that can be used to help grow and boost your self-esteem.

1. Self-Acceptance:

Learn to accept yourself for who you are in this moment. It is vital that you are in the right mind-frame in order for you to begin to boost your self-esteem. Self-acceptance is one way to make sure that you are moving in the right direction toward this goal.

How about trying to find the good things from now on? Instead of tilting your head as you walk down the street in case someone looks at you, look around and see how many people are smiling and waving. Record all of the positives: each compliment, each smile, each pleasant comment. Enter your brain, accept them. You will find that when you start looking for good things about yourself, you will see others, like those red cars!

We must face up to our bad opinions. We are often too tough on ourselves, but what have we really done that is so awful to talk about the way we do it? We would certainly not condemn a loved one the way we condemn ourselves, so for what reason is it acceptable to do it to yourself? These bad beliefs are ideas, not facts. They have no proof to back them. What did you do well? What did you get? What are your good attributes?

Whatever it is that is your good features when you think about it, what benefits have you got from thinking of yourself this way? Was it useful? What did it protect you from? Has it limited you? Did it affect your life? Did it stop you from trying something?

Have you minimized your results? Has it negatively affected your relationships or prevented you from achieving your goals?

It doesn't have to be fantastic, but a good start to health would be a bit of self-acceptance, maybe "I'm doing my best and that's enough." The main objective is to practice self-care. Try to accept who you are and treat yourself with the same kindness and respect that you would treat anyone else.

2. Stop Overthinking:

Stop over-thinking about the negative aspects of your life. Stop getting caught up in the little things. The minute you're not focused on anything but yourself, you'll be able to see, feel, and act accordingly. If you don't feel good about yourself, everyone else is going to see it as well. All you have to do is stop caring what people think, and you'll soon see your self-esteem increase.

Calming your mind is a special skill that takes determination, consistency, and patience. The reason why it is beneficial to quiet your mind is because so many advantages come from having peace within yourself. When you find peace on the inside, it will become easier to find peace outside of you in every situation and environment you surround yourself with. The goal behind inner peace and a quiet mind isn't to stop thinking, but to surpass the barriers your mind keeps you trapped in. Here are secrets to finding inner peace and stop overthinking:

- **Consciously and purposely challenge your thoughts**

This technique revolves around cognitive behavioral therapy. Many psychologists swear by this method because it means that you can control or alter your thoughts to another direction and create new patterns or habits of the way you interact with your thoughts. You take control back by challenging them. Start by asking yourself about your thoughts. So, if your thought is that you aren't good enough, then ask yourself where this comes from. Are you jumping to conclusions? Which one of the cognitive

distortions does this thought fall under? Next, find the positive. What has happened in your life that makes you feel as if you are not good enough? Finding the root of the thought of where it's coming from can really give you insight for taking your control back because you can then replace it with the truth.

- **Stop multitasking**

Although multitasking can be a good thing, this is one reason why our brain operates on overdrive. When we try to focus, think about, or do too many things at once, it means that our brains are switching focus from one thing to the next, then to the next. This way of thinking actually weakens the ability to get multiple things done at once. For example, do you find when you clean your house that you start with the dishes, then you move on to vacuuming before the dishes are done, then you continue to wipe the counters and find yourself sweeping or mopping the floors twice? You may find that after all that work, you are more exhausted. When you look around, you still have laundry or more dishes to do, and it looks as if you barely did anything. This is the effect of multitasking.

Multitasking creates a shorter attention span and a distracted mind, also known as the “monkey brain” or the “squirrel effect.” To stop multitasking, try focusing on one thing at a time and make sure you do not move on to the next thing until that one task is completed.

- **Intentionally focus on your breathing**

Oftentimes, we get anxious, worried, or set off our “false alarm” triggers because we aren't breathing properly. Close your eyes and focus on where your breath is coming from: your stomach, your chest, or your nose. Next, just practice noticing your breath without changing it. Once you have figured out where your breath is coming from and how you are breathing, you can then focus on taking in deep, long breaths. Count your inhale to five seconds, hold for three seconds, and exhale for five-to-

seven seconds. Repeat until you feel calmer, and then go back to normal breathing before you open your eyes again.

3. Increase Self-Confidence:

Self-confidence plays a key role in developing your social skills. When you believe in yourself, you can broaden your social circles, advance in your career, and develop meaningful relationships. Confidence also enables you to protect yourself against those who may hurt and take advantage of you. It also keeps you from developing social anxiety and depression.

How do you develop confidence in a world teeming with different people? Here are the fundamental strategies to practice constantly:

Reflect On Your Existing Social Skills

Consider how you normally interact with others. If you discover a few trouble spots, then you work towards improving these areas. Here are some questions you can answer to help you know where to get started:

1. Do you tend to slouch when in front of others?
2. Do you keep your head down while talking to someone?
3. Is your voice too loud or too timid?
4. Do you cross your arms or legs when someone is talking to you?
5. Do you smile and make eye contact when someone greets you?

Make Eye Contact And Smile

Do you know what will make the best first impression? Looking at a person's eyes and smiling at him. Not doing so will cause the other person to think that you are insecure, snobbish or not to be trusted.

As soon as you are introduced to someone, do not be shy to smile and make eye contact as you listen to him. Make sure that it is natural instead of “rehearsed,” for obvious reasons. If you think you need more practice, try it out with a friend so that you won’t feel so self-conscious since you already know each other. Once you get the hang of it, start with the first person to whom you are introduced.

Be A Great Listener

A healthy dose of self-confidence is great, but too much of it will cause others to walk in the opposite direction as soon as you enter the room. Now, the best way to achieve balance and gain just the right amount of confidence is to develop curiosity towards others – not in an obsessive way, obviously, but in a way that will enable you to actually listen to them.

Better yet, ask follow-up questions so that you can keep the conversation going. For instance, if someone mentioned that they love playing video games, you can ask them which ones they like best. It may sound simple, but it is actually a great technique for those who are still working on building their confidence, because it lets them talk to others without actually being in the spotlight.

Practice Confident Body Language Skills

There are books dedicated to helping you improve your body language, especially in a social setting. However, of all the advice you can get, the most basic one to keep in mind is to maintain good posture. It is important to strike that balance that will keep you from looking insecure or arrogant.

The ability to communicate well with others will improve your quality of life in all aspects. Now you may think that developing these social skills requires a lot of confidence, but in reality, you can actually “fake it ‘til you make it.”

Each day presents to you many social opportunities to pretend as if you are already the most confident that you want to be. Keep in mind that even something as simple

as smiling and greeting the barista at your local coffee shop, or the saleslady at the department store can be counted as progress.

4. Quiet Your Inner Critic:

You also have to change and quiet your critical inner voice. It is that negative voice in your head that brings you down all the time. It is that voice that tells you that you cannot do it and that you should not attempt doing anything in the first place. It is the voice that prevents you from reaching your goals and becoming successful.

According to Dr. Firestone, every person has a critical inner voice in their heads. It is the cruel coach that tells people they are worthless and not worthy of happiness. It is the result of painful childhood experiences as well as critical attitudes that people were exposed to early in their lives. It is also the way their parents felt about themselves. These attitudes can be ingrained in your system over time. So, as an adult, you may no longer view them as your enemy. Because they have been with you for so long, you have accepted them and their negative views as your own.

To challenge your inner critic and see yourself for who you truly are, you have to be more aware of your thoughts, feelings, values, and desires. You can practice self-compassion to foster a sense of self-worth.

The next time you feel like beating yourself up or putting yourself down, remember that it's all in your own head. If you find yourself stuck in that cycle of self-deprecating thoughts, shove away that insecure voice in the back of your mind that tells you that you aren't good enough. It's easy to feel better about yourself when you feel fully confident in who it is that you are.

5. Overcome Insecurities:

In order to grow your self-esteem, it's going to be necessary to overcome your insecurities. Insecurities can be disruptive to your overall well-being and can complicate your everyday, routine life. If you're experiencing insecurities, whether

they be about your appearance or your image, you should consider making a few changes.

Acknowledge your insecurities to accept them. Our own negative perception of our physical appearance stems from irrational thought. This is why it is important to determine the root cause of what is eating your self-confidence as far as your looks are concerned. That way, we can figure out healthy solutions to overcome these insecurities.

Start by asking yourself, “Why don’t I feel confident in how I look?” Write or sketch out any of the thoughts that come to mind.

Then, ask yourself, “Why don’t I like these attributes?” and “When did I start to not like them?” Keep writing down everything that comes to mind.

For example: I don’t like myself because of my acne. I think people always stare at me because of how bad my acne is. It all began when I heard someone make a joke about it and everyone laughed.

After acknowledging these thoughts, the next and most important step is to assure yourself by saying, “I am worth more than how I look. It is merely only a part of a much bigger whole.” Remind yourself that everyone, including you, has strengths as well as flaws.

While you are indeed in the process of self-improvement, it does not mean you should simply focus on fixing your flaws. Rather, it is about embracing your strengths and accepting your weaknesses.

6. Cultivate Positivity:

You need to choose to cultivate positive thinking, which will lead to a new and improved view of your life. Continue to appreciate and love, and focus on the bright rather than on the things you don't like about yourself. Positive thinking will help you to begin to feel better about yourself.

While it isn't a great move to blame our failings on others, often other people can be responsible for our low self-esteem. This is true if we hang out with the wrong crowd – if our friends are prone to pointing out our flaws instead of building us up and raving about us.

And this is why you need to avoid toxic people. Ironically, if you consider everything that we have said in the first chapter, it is often the people who lack confidence who feel the need to try and damage ours. They make us feel small to make themselves feel bigger.

If you know negative and toxic people like this, then you should make a conscious attempt to not hang out with those kinds of people anymore. Likewise, you should spend more time with the positive people who love you.

And if you do have to spend time with people who are damaging your esteem? Then just consider their motives for everything they say. If they are criticizing you, then is it because they genuinely think you've done something wrong? Or is it because they are jealous? Or because they're just a negative kind of person? Don't let it affect how you feel about yourself.

7. Learn To Let Go & Forgive Yourself:

You'll never can move forward if you are constantly holding on to the past. Forgive yourself, and learn to let go of things that no longer serve your best interest. As you learn to let go of things, it will become easier to release the negative feelings and

emotions that you've been holding on to and let them go. Letting go of stress and worry is essential to grow and smile again.

If there is any shortcut to healthy self-esteem, this is probably it. When you manage to forgive yourself, you take your self-esteem to another level. It's all about kindness to ourselves and having compassion - not only for others but for ourselves. (Do not confuse this with self-pity, which is toxic.)

One reason for low self-esteem is because we feel guilty for something we've done or left undone, so it is crucial to forgive yourself. As soon as you've completed this, your self-esteem increases, and you will also be capable of forgiving others.

Be forgiving to yourself, accept your mistakes and vow to never repeat them, forgive yourself for your flaws (you're only human and do not have to be perfect) and work on your own strengths. Forgive yourself for your sins and do not repeat them if possible.

The changes you'll see when you figure out how to forgive yourself are absolutely remarkable! Occasionally disorders go away; occasionally self-forgiveness clears the previous energy block to allow wealth to come into your life. Just do it and see what forgiveness is going to do for you in your lifetime.

8. Love Yourself:

Continue to love the person you are rather than who you believe you are. When your self-esteem is soaring, you're going to feel awesome. Learn to love yourself, and begin to live the kind of life that you want without any regrets. Be proud of who you are.

If you want to improve your self-worth, you should love yourself for who you are. This is the first step towards having a greater sense of self-worth. Refrain from comparing yourself to other people and feeling bad about the things they have that you do not have. Do not be envious of their professional accomplishments, money, or possessions.

Keep in mind that what they have do not really matter because you only have to focus on your own life.

So what if these other people are rich and successful? What can that contribute to your own life? Checking them out on social media and feeling bad that you are not as rich and successful as them will not do you any good. Feeling resentful about other people's success will not improve your own success rate. Do not keep tabs on your peers or colleagues and secretly compete with them. Focus on your own self and goals.

Focus on achieving your goals and being successful in your own time. Keep tabs on your own milestones and note the mistakes that you make so that you can do better the next time around. Be open to suggestions and constructive criticisms, but do not be affected by the negative judgment of others.

You also have to change your critical inner voice. It is that negative voice in your head that brings you down all the time. It is that voice that tells you that you cannot do it and that you should not attempt doing anything in the first place. It is the voice that prevents you from reaching your goals and becoming successful.

9. Be Thankful to Others:

Taking the time to appreciate others or focus on them will ultimately lead to a more positive outlook. Take time to appreciate people who have helped you throughout the years, and give them a sincere thank you. Learn how to enjoy the moment. Take time out to think about the good in life.

There is so much in life that you should be thankful for each and every day; try and give thanks on some level each and every day. Point out things that others do for you to make your life better each and every day and make sure you acknowledge these things and give thanks to those that give them to you. If you are a religious person remember to give thanks to your higher power for giving you the life you live today.

But just remember the power to improve your life lies in your hands; you must be the one to take the steps towards the healthier happier life no one can take these steps for you. Good luck in your journey to less worrying and more enjoying life to the fullest!

Many of these tips will help you to grow your self-esteem. It might take some time to grow your self-esteem, but when you finally do, you'll be ecstatic with the positive changes in your life.

Chapter 8. The 14-Day Challenge

Now that you've gotten to go through all the ways you can improve your self-esteem and boost your confidence level, it's time to put them to the test. This part will look at a 14-day challenge that you can try to make sure that your goals will be met.

How the challenge works is simple. Every day, when you wake up, you need to look at the corresponding day and see what the challenge is. Then, once you're done with it, you'll record how it made you feel and how difficult it was. If there were some things that felt odd, jot them down as well.

DAY 1: Compliment 3 People Today

This is a simple task to start the challenge. Go out of your way to genuinely compliment three random people on something. Listen to how they respond and see if they complement you back. Don't worry if they don't compliment you back; many individuals are not very accustomed to being complimented by anyone, so they'll probably say "thank you" and move on. However, if you were to give them more time, their likelihood of complimenting you back raises.

DAY 2: Laugh at Least Once Today

All you need to do is laugh at something today (a real laugh, not a forced one). This exercise is all about putting a smile on your face and replacing those negative thoughts you have about yourself with positive thoughts that are tied to humor.

DAY 3: Write Down 5 Good Things About Yourself

When you wake up, write down five good things about yourself. Try not to think about them too much because, at that point, you'll start to look at your life through a positive lens. Ask yourself, "What are five good things about me?" are probably going to be the most genuine ones. This is because you haven't had a lot of time to ponder your thoughts and decide which ones you want to project to the world.

DAY 4: Write Down 3 of Your Strongest Attributes

When you wake up, write down three of your strongest attributes and how you use them to your advantage. It is to show yourself that you're capable of a lot and not everything about you is negative. Often, when we take time to look at ourselves and actually look at who we are, we see that we are capable of way more and a lot stronger than we think.

DAY 5: Do a Random Act of Kindness

At some time today, go out of your way to perform a simple act of kindness. Buy a stranger's coffee, clean the house without being asked, or shovel the neighbor's driveway, for instance.

DAY 6: Write Down 6 Good Things About Yourself

This is the same activity as Day 3, but you can't repeat any of the things you listed beforehand. This time, you have to come up with six new things.

DAY 7: Compliment 4 People Today

This is similar to the activity on Day 1, but you're going to compliment four people instead, not just three.

DAY 8: Invite Someone Out for Lunch or Dinner

For today's activity, all you need to do is act someone if they want to go to lunch or dinner with you. It doesn't need to be on a date and can be strictly as friends. It can be anyone you'd like. The point of this little dinner date, for lack of a better term, is to get you out of your comfort zone then into more of a socializing position. This will help you see what you're capable of and give you a little more confidence when you're talking to people and you come face-to-face with them.

DAY 9: Text or Call a Close Friend

Pick up your phone then call or text a close friend. Catch up and see how they're doing. Also, find out if you can make the conversation last for longer than 20 minutes.

DAY 10: Laugh at Least Twice Today

This is a simple task. All you need to do is genuinely laugh twice today. Whether it is actually genuine or not won't really matter in the long run. When people smile for as little as 30 seconds a day, their mood instantly goes from being negative to positive. This can work wonders for your self-esteem because you can get those negative thoughts out of your head and possibly replace them with positive thoughts.

DAY 11: Do Another Random Act of Kindness

Go out of your way to perform a random act of kindness for a stranger who you've never met before. The simple little action can cause a ripple in the entire world around you.

In the early 2000s, there was a movement called the Pay It Forward movement that essentially took this idea of doing random acts of kindness for others and spun it on its head. If someone did a random act of kindness for you, you'd do random acts of kindness for someone else in return — you would Pay It Forward. Next thing everyone knew, people were performing acts of kindness all over the place. It isn't confirmed if this improved the participants' self-esteem, but it sure made everyone's day better. A good way to help yourself is to help the world around you, after all.

DAY 12: Write Down 4 of Your Strongest Attributes

This is similar to the activity on Day 4, but you're listing four different attributes that you like about yourself. Make sure you're taking your time with this activity because it's the perfect time to reflect on yourself and how your life has been for the last week and a half or so.

DAY 13: Compliment 5 People Today

Today, you're going to compliment five different people for doing five different things. For example, you can only compliment someone's hair, smile, etc. The reason why this is such a powerful exercise is that, by complimenting other people's features, we begin to notice our own features. And you never know; the person you complimented could be going through the same self-esteem issues that you do, and you could have just made their day.

DAY 14: Invite Someone New Out for Lunch or Dinner

You will invite someone you don't know very well out to lunch or supper and get to know them. It is a great opportunity to learn something new and really break through the walls of your comfort zone. Always remember that every person you meet has their own story and always knows something you don't, so never settle.

And that's it! The 14-day challenge wasn't designed to be incredibly difficult, but it can get you out of your comfort zone then into the real world. Hopefully, by the end of the two weeks, you will have more confidence in your social abilities a little.

Note: Feel free to challenge yourself a bit more by adding your own restrictions to the activities. For example, for Day 10, you have to laugh because of two different things with two different individuals. You get what you give with this challenge, so in order to really benefit from it, you need to put in the effort.

The great thing about the 14-day challenge is that you can do it even when it's over. After completing this challenge, you may have already been introduced to a few little things that you can keep on doing in your life. Over time, they will have a large impact on your self-esteem and slowly build more confidence in your ability to interact with people and see the beauty in yourself as a human.

Many successful people have noticed that waking up and counting their blessings (as well as recording the things that they love about themselves) has led them to feel

better not only about themselves but also about their businesses and where they're headed life-wise.

Chapter 9. When Things Don't Improve?

In some cases, despite your best efforts, things just don't get better. You've tried everything, and you still find yourself embarrassed to be who you are, unsure of your skills, unworthy of another person's love, and scared to be authentic. This is the case for some people. However, it's not the end of the world.

Thanks to how far we've come with modern medicine, there are a few routes that you can take to improve your mood, suppress the negative self-talk, and focus on rebuilding all the relationships and opportunities you have missed while going through one of your episodes.

Doctor

This is the first person you will want to see if you believe your self-esteem issues may be more severe than just lacking confidence in yourself. This is great because a doctor will be able to properly gauge how severe your self-esteem issues are and prescribe the best course of action to ensure you get the treatment you need.

Sometimes doctors will talk to you themselves and ignore the two other options for getting rid of the issue. If this happens, do not worry; they are trained and will help you if you continue to need it.

Therapy

Therapy is one of the services that may be offered or prescribed to you by the doctor following your original checkup. Therapy will focus on getting you to talk and helping you to find strategies to overcome some of the difficult aspects of living with low self-esteem.

In some cases, you may be speaking to more than one therapist at a time. While this seems like a bad thing, remember that there is no shame in needing therapy. Besides,

it takes courage to go out and get help for something that you may or may not want people to know about.

Medication

This is another possibility that the doctor may suggest you take advantage of in order to improve your mood. In some cases, your negative attitude and low self-esteem may be an issue that stems from genetics or an imbalance of chemicals in the brain. If either of them is the issue, there's not much you can do but treat the symptoms. There are some medications that stimulate the release of certain chemicals in the brain, but they tend to cost much of money.

Regardless of the method of treatment that you go with, it's important that you remain positive and follow all of the directives of the medical staff. Both therapy and medications are normal, despite what an outspoken group of people may say. If you believe that they help you, there is no reason for you to believe anything different.

Note: If your symptoms get worse and you start to dream of hurting yourself or others, it's important that you stop any medication and contact medical professionals immediately. It may also be worth it to notify a close friend of yours so that they can keep an eye on you and ensure you're not hurting yourself or anyone else.

Chapter 10. Helping Others

Humans are social animals, so we depend on each other for protection and social acceptance. When we face a condition or complication that threatens our safety or makes us feel out of place, we seek help. As a member of a community, we are hotwired to help anyone who needs it. As someone who suffers from self-esteem problems, you are aware of the issues and challenges that other people like yourself may have. While this doesn't necessarily qualify you to help them from a medical standpoint, it does give you the ability to give them some pointers and get them in contact with people who are able to help.

Offering Resources

Seeing as low self-esteem is fairly common, it may be worthwhile to have a few resources on-hand that you can give to someone you run into who seems like they're having a rough time. It can include phone numbers to help lines, as well as email addresses and websites that people can visit to get help or learn more about what their dealing with it.

Giving Pointers

When you run into someone who seems to be dealing with the same self-esteem issues as you, you should give them a hand and offer a few tips for living with it. Talk with them and discuss the various things that have helped you get through it, as well as what has made it worse or treatment methods that didn't work so much.

While you may not get rid of their self-esteem issues, you are showing them that someone cares and that they are not alone. People with low self-esteem often have troubles coming out about their comfort zone because they feel like no one cares or listens to them. Giving someone with low self-esteem your 100%, undivided attention when you're talking to them is one of the best things you can do.

Giving Them Space

If someone you're close with is suffering from low self-esteem, make sure to give them some space. While they may be craving some human contact, there is a point where it becomes too much. Thus, you should read the conversation closely and be aware when they start to feel overwhelmed. Little things like uncomfortable shifting, looking around, looking at the clock, or constantly fidgeting with things may be signs that it is time for you to go and leave them to do their own work.

You also want to give them space on the good days. When they seem to be having a really good one and they're all smiles, give them a bit of room and avoid bringing it up. This can cause a change in their mind, and they can be reminded of their insecurities.

People with low self-esteem aren't weird or mutated humans like some individuals seem to treat them as. Being that person can completely change someone's day and make them feel validated, even if just for a little. Use your experiences to make it happen.

Note: Do not approach someone as if you're a doctor who's ready to listen to them and diagnose them. While lending an open ear can do wonders for both your relationship with them and their mental health, it becomes a problem when you begin acting like a therapist. Make sure that they don't become dependent on telling you things and venting with you. Therapists are trained to detect when to stop talking about certain things and know how to read a conversation properly, so leave the sit-down therapy sessions to them.

Self-Esteem and Your Kids

As a parent, you wish what's best for your kid. What a lot of parents don't realize is that childhood is one of the most vulnerable times of our lives. During childhood, we basically develop who we are. We learn what's right from what's wrong, what's good

and what's bad, and what is expected of us as a future member of society. This time in our lives is also very critical to developing our self-esteem and how we feel about ourselves.

The majority of a child's self-esteem, as well as what they have as they enter into their teenage years, is very dependent on the amount of praise and the type of care they are given as kids. It is typical for a parent to feel like they have to shower their kids with love and affection in order for them to turn out okay, but the reality is very different. Children are like anyone else, in the sense that they are the product of the world around them, as well as the environment they're being exposed to everyday.

When parents basically keep their kids inside of this protective cushion, they miss out on a lot of life's lessons and things that will develop their self-esteem as they start to get older.

To help you understand the boundaries you should have with your kids in terms of praise, interactions, and affection, a list has been generated below. Understand, nevertheless, that this list may not apply to all children seeing as all children are different (just like adults).

Give Them Some Space

As parents, we have a tendency to always be there beside our kids through everything. While this isn't always a bad thing, it can have an effect on your child's self-esteem if you're too close to them and you don't give them enough space.

Focusing on a child's competency to problem solve, take risks, and deal with the outcomes of those risks is suggested to be just as important as showering your kids with praise. Remember that all kids want to be grown up; that's just the way childhood works. When you give them the ability to go out and take a risk by themselves and solve their own problems, you're essentially telling them that you trust them to be able to make their own decisions and to grow up. This level of trust will create a very good

bond with your child and let them know that you care about them which, over time, will prove to be a boost to their self-esteem.

Note: Do not let the children take too big of risks and have too much freedom because you have to remember that they are just kids. Use your head when you're letting them solve their own problems and make their own decisions because, in the end, whatever happens to them can always be dropped back on to you.

Don't Praise Them Too Much

As mentioned before, we want what's best for our kids. A lot of the time, we feel it's best to give them lots of praise and reward them for almost everything they do. The issue with this, however, is that we are essentially telling our kids that they are entitled to things and they don't necessarily need to go out of their way and earn anything. Over time, they will begin to expect things from us that they have not earned and will throw a tantrum when they don't get it.

Lowering the bar won't necessarily cause a problem when they are kids, but as they get older, they will still have this idea that they deserve and are entitled to things that they have not earned. This is where we start to see a lot of kids who have trouble adjusting in school, who always seem to be getting in fights with other kids because they think they deserve something that's not theirs, as well as kids who don't seem to put in effort into the work they do because they've always been rewarded for doing something half-assed.

In short, praising our children too much will often bring about problems as they advance in school and as they grow older. The side effects of these problems have proven to cause long-term issues among youth, making them more vulnerable to bullying and mental health issues.

Let Them Make Choices

As mentioned before, kids want to be adults. That being said, there's only so much freedom we can give them. Once you've established the latter, let them start making their own choices and develop their sense of individuality.

If kids are always told what to do, they'll never understand what they truly want as a person or be able to make their own decisions. We have all seen people who are cushioned too much as children and ended up always following in their parents' footsteps, even as adults. While this isn't always a bad thing, it's not necessarily healthy either. A child will feel very proud of themselves and be confident with his or her decisions once they realize that they're actually in control and that they're allowed to be their own person because they don't need to always be their parents.

Make It Clear That Your Love for Them Is Unconditional

As your child starts to grow up and as they start making their own decisions, there's always the possibility that will develop the feelings that you don't actually care about them because you let them make decisions from such a young age. This is where it's very important for you to make it very clear to your child that your love for them is unconditional. Remind your child every day that you love them and that they're the most important thing in your life.

In the end, your child's self-esteem will depend greatly on how you've treated them during their childhood years. More often than not, your child will turn out fine and live a very happy life. In the case that your child does run into self-esteem issues as they grow older, it's important that you don't blame yourself. You have to understand that all children are different and require various amounts of attention and affection. As a parent, especially if this is your 1st child, you have no idea how much they actually need until you're done raising them. This is one of the really unfortunate things about being a parent that will never really change.

What's vital is that you tried your best to raise them properly and reassured them every day that, if they ever need anything, they're always welcome to go to you.

Chapter 11. The Art of Handling Challenges

Challenges are a way of life. They're a way of making us stronger and enabling our evolution into more successful human beings. Big or small, every challenge appears to be a mountain when one is confronted by it. So, while it's easy to term some challenges as easy and some as tough, after the event so to say, no challenge seems simple to tackle when one stumbles across it.

While challenges work to bring out the best in some people, in others they end up bringing out the worst – their worst weaknesses and imperfections. Either way, challenges trigger a change in a person and this change then goes on to influence the rest of his/her life. How you handle the challenges and the resultant changes thus defines your ability to direct the course of your life.

Now you'll find some people giving in to challenges, or simply surrendering before them, while others will pull out all their latent strengths to handle the challenges they encounter on the way to the successful accomplishment of their goals in life. Depending on what they do with the challenges, and with the changes that ensue from their handling of these challenges, you'll therefore find people ending up either as successes or failures in life.

It becomes imperative, therefore, to creatively utilize the imperfections that challenges highlight in our persona to drive ourselves to higher self-esteem and greater confidence. Because that's the only way we can move forward in life and achieve the goals and targets we've set out to do. In the absence of such creative efforts, we'll be left floundering like pebbles in the ocean currents, with no direction to move towards.

But how does one go about doing that? It's not easy, after all, to look at your weaknesses as strengths, especially when faced with what seems to be an insurmountable challenge in your life's journey. On the contrary, one would have

thought that only the strong can battle challenges and cross them to emerge victorious in life.

While it may, on the face of it, seem contrarian, the fact is that imperfections are integral to every human being's personality and need to be fought by every person, strong or weak, when faced with a challenge. And since we are all facing challenges constantly in life, it's important for us to learn to deal with them effectively, utilizing our imperfections to bring out the best in us.

Actually, as long as you go about it in a regulated and systemic manner, battling challenges will not prove to be as hard as you assume it to be. All you need to do is go about it step by step, with a creative approach driven by innovative thinking, and success will definitely be yours.

To begin with, as we did with imperfections, challenges also require to be properly identified and also carefully categorized as major or minor. Unless you do that, you'll not really be able to figure out how much time, effort or energy you need to expend on combating it. So, start by acknowledging and accepting the challenge you're faced with.

The next step is not to overreact, nor take a decision in a hurry. After all, you'd be a stupid person indeed if you decided to give in your resignation simply because your boss asked you to prepare a presentation overnight. If you did that, you'd end up taking probably one of the worst decisions of your life, and one which you're more than likely to regret soon enough. Staying calm is more likely to see you through the challenge you're faced with. So, make peace with yourself and get down to the task at hand, without wasting time uselessly ranting about it.

It's all about accepting things as they are, and also accepting people as they are. Your boss has always been like that, hasn't he? Waking up at the last minute to deliver unrealistic deadlines? But then, you've managed it before, haven't you? So why can't

you do it now? As long as you remember to tell yourself this, and accept the reality, harsh as it may be, the chances of you succeeding in meeting the challenge will be bright indeed. Feeling miserable about it will not only ruin your presentation but will keep you in a grumpy mood at office and home for the next several days, without any concrete change emerging in your reality.

Ok, so you've decided you're not going to wallow in self-pity but are going to get cracking on the presentation your boss has suddenly thrown into your lap. All very good, but do remember that all your efforts will be rendered useless if you spend your time blaming your boss for his blatant stupidity. One thing that's sure to happen in such a case is that the word will eventually get around to your boss that you've been cribbing against him and even the best of presentations made by you won't compensate for the loss of favor you'll thus incur. There's really no point in pointing fingers at others (forgive the pun) when faced with a challenge.

Another important part of tackling challenges is to set your goals clearly and not lose sight of them whatever the circumstances. As long as you've made up your mind to succeed, nothing can prevent you from doing so. It's really a matter of how badly you want to accomplish your goals and meet the targets you've set for yourself. If, when faced with a challenge, you decide to give up on your goals, even the best of your efforts will not help you overcome the obstacles on the way. In fact, you should keep reiterating and reasserting your goals, at least to yourself if not to the world. Doing so will help you ensure that your goals remain firmly etched in your mind and you continue to remain committed to their accomplishment.

Another related aspect of this issue is to avoid overanalyzing your goals. Because every time you decide to re-examine your goals, you will find yourself looking at them afresh, from a new perspective, which may then lead you to transform your goals. This, in turn, would mean starting from the scratch, and commencing the journey towards achieving your goals afresh. This would, in effect, cause you to undo all the

efforts of the past and embark on a fresh odyssey, which may again come to naught the next time you decide to overanalyze. Overanalyzing is clearly, then, detrimental to your success.

Once you've decided to stick to your stated goals, come what may, you can move on to focusing on things that are going right rather than those that are not working. There really is no point lamenting about the could-have-been. It's better to focus all your attention and efforts on stuff that seems to be working for you, as far as your goals go.

But simply staying focused on your goals, and what goes into making them succeed, also doesn't always work. In such cases, it may be a good idea to break your goals into small, actionable targets and set yourself the task of accomplishing them bit by bit every day. By doing so, you'll not feel challenged by the enormity of meeting your targets but will start looking at them as small steps to be taken one at a time.

Sometimes, just taking a break from your challenging tasks can help. Basically, this amounts to diverting your efforts to some other tasks, which you may find more interesting and more achievable. It could be simply learning to dance or play an instrument. Or maybe just going out for a walk or a jog in the neighborhood park! Perhaps you enjoy reading or have always wanted to learn a language? Now is the time to do it. It'll help you refresh your mind and enable it to think anew at the problem after some time.

Just let yourself go. Don't feel ashamed of discussing your problem with others or seeking their help. Simply sharing it may throw up some unexpected solutions to the challenges obstructing your path. Let others, who are less emotionally involved with the issue, guide you with their neutral perspective on the problem facing you.

And while you're doing that, be careful not to give in to fear – fear of failure. Tell yourself that it really won't matter if you don't succeed the first time. There's always

another time, another day. As long as you don't succumb to the fear of failure, the chances of success will remain high, possibly because fear of failure clouds the mind and prevents it from thinking and acting rationally. Even if you do things just a little better today than you did yesterday, it is distinct progress for you. It means you've improved since the previous day, and are likely to improve even further the next. Be thankful for what you've achieved rather than regret and cry over what you failed to deliver.

And finally, and most importantly, don't give up. Don't give up hope and faith. Don't give up trust. Don't give up on yourself. Look at your positives, which you know will help you tackle the challenges ahead of you. These positives will help you fight the negatives that are perpetually striving to prevent you from succeeding. So don't allow yourself to feel exhausted by wasted efforts. Instead look at these efforts as some more steps forward on the path to success.

Don't let challenges dictate the course of your life. Let your own efforts guide you through the path to success, helping you remove every challenge out of your way.

Conclusion

Now that you have read through the chapters of this book, that doesn't mean the work is finished. It is only just beginning. The tools that you will need to make all of this work are the following:

- A notebook – to write down your progress, to keep notes and to list goals
- A red marker – to cross off your goals as you achieve them
- A meditation space – to give you the peace of mind you need to move forward

I would also ask that you go back through the chapters and take notes of those areas that affect you or that you feel will help you to develop your self-esteem. It is easy to look backward in life and regret things that have happened. It's far harder to forgive and move on, but when you take the route that is suggested in this book, you will find you are not alone. There are thousands of people out there in the world with whom you can share what you learn. Not only will this help your self-esteem, but it will also give you purpose and a very good reason to continue the habits.

The care that you give to your body counts when it comes to feeding the body with all of the fuel it needs to present you to the world as a complete and happy human being.

You have learned the part that the brain plays in self-esteem, and that's an important lesson. Don't hesitate to go back to the chapters to reinforce your values and to ensure that you stick to the suggested habits. You are more in control of things than you give yourself credit for. Those fears could be controllable as could the anxiety, just by knowing what's going on inside you and why you feel that momentary panic in the first place.

I want you to shine. I want you to be able to move on from reading this book to a better understanding of life because, at the end of the day, your life counts from the

moment you decide to make it count. Start to plan your journey. Start to realize what your long-term ambitions are and make your life head in the right direction.

The most important aspect of all of this is that you are now living in the moment. What happened to you in the past only remains a part of you for as long as you allow it to. Now is the time to forgive and move on so that the events of the past do not dictate your level of self-esteem today. Think of self-esteem as the way that you look at yourself, and when you start to respect yourself and see good things, then you will find that those around you respect that great person that you may have kept hidden until now.

Learning to care for yourself is part of the journey; if you stop along the way to enjoy a sunset or to eat an ice-cream, then good for you! It is spontaneous acts of joy that make your world a better place and inspire you to carry on positively.

I am happy that you read the book cover to cover and that you have arrived here, at the end of the book, but at the beginning of a new understanding of who you are as a woman, and that you can now go forward with the guidance of the book. Self-esteem and confidence are worked on for the simple reason that life chips away at them, and although some women already know the remedy to fight back, others are not as aware of what helps to mend those chinks in their armor. Now you are, and I hope that you move forward, proud of what you learned and able to live the life that you fully deserve.

