

How to build confidence in yourself?

“Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit.”

This quote from E.E. Cummings encompasses the essence of Self-confidence. What is Self-confidence? Is it a trait we are born with or a skill that needs to be learned or developed? Well, maybe a bit both.

Self-confidence is a mindset about personal competencies, talents, proficiencies, and abilities. It simply requires us to accept and put trust in ourselves to have an awareness or direction in our lives. It is having that knowledge of our strengths, weaknesses, and that positive outlook of us. It is the positioning of one's self in a realistic atmosphere with attainable goals, imploring assertive communication, and the appropriate handling of criticism. Simply put, Self-confidence is the belief in us.

Now, how do we know that a person has confidence? A sure way of knowing is for that person to have the following traits:

- Doing what is right, even if everyone else doesn't agree with it
- Has the willingness to take risks
- Knows how to admit to their mistakes, apologizes, and learns from them
- Capable of acknowledging a compliment
- Oozes with a positive attitude

Again, do these traits come inborn with confident people, or did these people learn and develop these traits? Yes and no. Some confident people are naturally born with these traits but most of them were raised, have had experiences, and learned to develop these traits as they fought the everyday battles of life to become successful or just basically be happy. These people hallmarked the process of how to build confidence in yourself.

Why Building Confidence Matters?

One of the most fundamental things needed in all aspects of life is Self-confidence. It is a struggle to find it and lacking or having it can be very detrimental to the direction of our lives. Those who lack confidence may find themselves a lot less likely to triumph against life's endeavors.

Imagine a person trying to pitch you a proposal but demonstrates all the characteristics of timidity and insecurity e.g. nervousness, anxiety, consistent stuttering, and repeatedly very apologetic. Would you be willing to give them your hard-earned savings? Now, enter someone who exudes great confidence. He speaks so naturally that it feels like you have known him for

your entire life, assures you with every answer he gives for every question you have, or acknowledges his shortcoming if he has no idea about something. You would not think to question if you want to invest, you would only be thinking when to sign on that dotted line. People who have learned to develop or build confidence can encourage other people to build confidence in themselves too. May it be their bosses, their colleagues, their clients, their friends, or even an audience, they can command trust. Acquiring that confidence and trust enables them to be successful.

What do we benefit from building confidence?

Building confidence poses many benefits we can bring into our homes, our jobs, and even in our relationships. Here are some of the constructive effects of building confidence in yourself:

- Ability and Openness to Explore, Do or Experience new things: After building confidence in yourself, you learn to believe in yourself and become more enthusiastic and keen on exploring more horizons. Whether it is a promotion, a new art class, or a dinner date with that long-time crush, you get to put yourself out there.
- Greater Personal Performance: Not needing to worry about your abilities means less time and effort used. This gives you the energy and devotion to focus more on things that matter. So eventually, your performance gets way better when you feel confident.
- Toughness and Resiliency: Having confidence improves your overall resilience, or ability to bounce back from any challenges or adversities you face in life.
- Strong, Wholesome, and Healthy relationships: Achieving self-confidence does not only influence how you feel about yourself, but it gives you a superior understanding of others and how to give or share your affections with them. It also grants you the strength to step away if from a relationship that is not mutually reciprocal.

The Importance of Building confidence in You.

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.” - Helen Keller (Author, political activist, and lecturer.)

Self-confidence will always be accompanied by other's admiration. Self-confident people have this sense of effortlessness with their personas, their work, and the people around them. Inviting inspiration, trust and confidence are the attractive characteristics of self-confidence.

Self-confidence is essentially the understanding that you trust your knowledge, talents, and abilities, and that you see yourself as worthy, regardless of any imperfections or of what others may believe about you.

It goes without saying that the importance of building confidence in yourself lies in the capability or acumen of a person to achieve. A person can do a lot for himself and others with self-confidence. Confidence helps one connect within one's self and others better making people

closer to one another and bridge gaps in society. Lastly, Self-confidence is a human trait that is vital for the success and effectiveness of a person.

We have now tackled the who, the why, and the what. Let's get onto the how. How do you build confidence in yourself?

"Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one doesn't need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her." - Lao Tzu

How to build confidence in yourself all boils down to the belief in yourself that you are capable. That is where everything has to begin. How do we establish that belief?

1. Achievements – Know what are yours.

Believing that you have achieved nothing in this world takes a lot of confidence away from you. Achievements are achievements whether they are minute awards or gargantuan accolades. Anything you can be proud of in this life is an achievement. Getting a good grade on an exam, learning how to ride a bike, figuring out how to put Netflix on-screen, or even just knowing the formula of your baby's milk can be all achievements. Keep these achievements in mind or better yet, do a list of them. When you experience downtime, pull this out and remind yourself that you are one heck of an awesome person!

2. I know how to...

All of us have skills, talents, or things that we are good at. Discover what you are good at. Once you can pinpoint those things, you can develop and enhance them. This will greatly help you build your confidence.

3. What should I do next?

Remember the list of achievements? Why don't we add some more to that list? Establish some goals. They can be as simple as learning to make sushi or as complicated as developing your own Information Management program. No matter what, just try to achieve these goals. Does not matter if it takes a couple of hours or months to attain just do it! Achieving goals is a great confidence booster.

4. Time for some Pep Talk!

Some people will always have something to say, most of them will not be that good to the eardrums. Some may provide discomfort to the heart. Dismiss that. Look in the mirror and talk yourself up. Remind yourself of how good you are and that you deserve what you want. Actor Kevin Spacey had a great example of what this means in his movie Casino Jack. Self-talk can bring a lot of confidence in you and can prove to be a best friend that will continue to cheer you on even if everyone else says either.

5. Passion

There are things we are good at and there are things we want to be good at. That is what we call our passion. Being passionate about something requires our interest which can be the motivation for us to become very good at something. You could commit yourself to teach Sunday class, learning how to dance the Black Swan, or just simply, writing short stories. Interest and passion for things build our skills towards those activities. We develop those skills quicker. This results in building more confidence through the acquiring of new or enhanced skills.

6. Comparison

Comparing yourself to others is a problem in building confidence. Whether it is how you look or how much you earn against your friends or colleagues, comparisons will never be any good. When you see yourself in this mist of envy or jealousy, remind yourself that it is wrong and it will never be any form of help for yourself. We all have our race in life. We don't have to compete.

7. Creating a Circle of Positivity

Take good notice of the feeling you have around your friends. Is it uplifting? Do they bring you down? Is there judgment for who you are or acceptance? Friends are people we spend time with. Whether we like it or not, they bring influence towards how we see ourselves. Friends should make you feel right about yourself. If you feel down after hanging out with a friend, maybe it is a good idea to not hang out anymore.

8. Mens sana in corpore sano. "A healthy mind and a healthy body" -

Your health is very important to feel good about yourself. Having good health brings about a good mind, body, and spirit which also bestows natural confidence.

What healthy self-care practices promote self-confidence?

- Maintain a Balanced Diet: Right food equals a healthier and energized body, mind, and soul. This gives you a better feeling about yourself.
- Exercise: Physical activities and exercise naturally boost confidence. This also improves the physical performance of the person.
- Meditation and Peace of Mind: Finding ways to relax and focus helps boost confidence through the recognition of one's true self. It helps the person to learn how to cancel out negative energy and the mental pressures affecting self-confidence.
- Sleep: Having 6-8 hours of sleep goes a long way. Good and quality sleep recuperates the mind and body. This puts the person in a more optimistic state promoting good self-confidence.

9. Self-Compassion

How does it feel when we show compassion to others or when compassion is given to us? Is it not great? Being kind to yourself after making or rather failing to achieve something gives us the energy to stand right up. Negativity will always be present and nine times out of ten we will face negative setbacks in trying to reach our goals. Being more flexible about our emotions enhances our chances of reaching our goals and our connection to ourselves and others. Being not perfect or failing, or making mistakes is being human. When faced with a challenge that seems unconquerable, remember it is just a bump in life's long road and that there is more than one way to get over the bump. Let us learn to cross these challenges with more self-compassion.

10. Get out of your Comfort Zone and Face Your Fears

We all have that natural tendency to stay where we are used to. Most people do not dare and just like to endure their present state. Remember the “benefits of building confidence in yourself” earlier in this article about being open to exploring, doing, and experiencing new things? Well, this kind of the how to have that benefit.

When we learn to get out of our comfort zone and face our fears beyond, we start to build confidence. We will meet some setbacks and negative results for sure, but we will learn from them. Learning from those experiences will build our confidence needed to overcome these challenges. Who knows, in the end, we will get to realize that mistakes are not bad and that anxiety only gets us nowhere.

So there you have it. Building confidence or becoming a confident person is truly more of a developmental asset than just something we are born with. Having confidence is a vital trait, characteristic, or skill that everyone needs to acquire or develop to become successful in dreams and goals. As we learned from this article, Self-confidence is both important and beneficial and is very helpful in making us, happy persons.

Also, building confidence is not that hard to do as the great Mahatma Gandhi said:

“Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.”

Which summarizes the whole idea of how to build confidence in yourself - the belief in one's self. This simply acknowledges that building our confidence all boils down to one word – belief. There is no measure to what we are capable of doing if we put our minds to it. May it be asking a girl out on a date, trying to make that perfect lasagna for a Sunday night dinner with the family, or making your own company one of the best in the world, we all just have to believe that we can do it.

Bill Gates believed in Microsoft when no one else did and he went on to become one of the most successful businessmen in the world. Albert Einstein was considered crazy by many until he

formulated the Theory of Special Relativity and became one of the greatest scientists in history. Henry Ford wanted to create a fast and economical way of mass-producing cars and so he introduced the assembly line technique which revolutionized the auto industry as we know it. All these achievements sprung into life all because these people believed in what they can do and in themselves. It is that belief that brought their visions into reality.

So, what are you waiting for? Bring yourself together and introduce yourself into a new world, a world where you inspire others, where you exude confidence, where you can push for what you truly desire and be confident enough to motivate yourself to get it. Come into a world that does not bind you to mediocrity but drives you into greatness. Frolic under the sun and face your challenges head-on. Put all your inhibitions aside and open yourself to opportunities you thought you could never have. Even better is to turn those opportunities into things you can tick off your list of goals and add to your list of achievements. Do not fret the impossible but rather strive to make everything a possibility. Like Paulo Coelho wrote in *The Alchemist*:

“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”

Life is way too short for what-ifs. Start living your life to the fullest and begin to build confidence in yourself!