

**A to Z of**  
**How to Build**  
**Confidence &**  
**Self Esteem**

**Bruno LoGreco**

## A to Z of How to Build Confidence & Self Esteem

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## Introduction

Self esteem is the power to judge oneself and to think positively about one's abilities and strengths. Self confidence is the ability to accept reality and face it with courage, being fully aware of one's own inner strengths and weaknesses. Outstanding performance, satisfactory job and promotion -- everything depends on your self esteem. Inner stability, attractive personality – all these are by-products of self esteem. Self confidence and self esteem is not about beating your own drum and announcing your supremacy to the external world. It is the virtue of acceptance and contentment. It is something that will establish, justify and strengthen your identity in the world, lead to greater success, inner realization, happiness and satisfaction.

Success is not an overnight achievement. It is a process of progressive realization of worthy goals. Self confidence and self esteem are two most important ingredients for success.

To build self confidence and self esteem first you have to know yourself. Self confidence or self esteem is the only path that can lead to your desired success, and beyond. The greatest secret in moving successfully ahead in life is to walk confidently on the path that lead to your Goal – with single-minded focus, without looking behind, without hesitation, without the fear of failure.

## Do you want to be a sophisticated failure or a successful person?

Self confidence usually goes on building itself on our earlier successes –on how well we have done in previous situations in our life. This is the result of what we feel about our past performance and how we visualize ourselves performing in future. Our self worth is based upon our perception of our previous deeds. We all benchmark our personal values on how effectively we tackle different situations. We often are keen to perform perfectly in various walks of life. If we don't live up to our own standard of perfection, gradually we end up lowering our values. We are heavily influenced by our society, which values flawless performance and places great importance on winning and performing perfectly. The general feeling is –'there's no place for losers in this world'. We often ignore the fact that we can value ourselves *in spite of making mistakes* in life. It is our inherent sense of worth that really matters.

A person should try to perform the best he can. He should apply his concentration and will power to provide his best effort. But at the same time, self acceptance is of importance. He needs to learn how to accept himself- all his strengths and limitations. He has to accept all his drawbacks and previous blunders that he committed. Our childhood and adolescence experiences play a vital role for this. Some of the parents may not have the clear idea how to motivate their children to achieve their life goals. These children can not learn to develop their self confidence and self esteem during their growing years. They need a proper guidance to show how to follow the path of real success using the necessary tools - hard work, intelligence, honesty, discipline and self management.

We usually define romance and sexuality according to our perceptions and experiences. Parents may not help us considerably in this case. The electronic media- Television, movies, newspapers, magazines etc. are used as the main source of this knowledge. Some of us may not be frank enough to discuss their puberty problems with their parents or superiors. Therefore, there is a great possibility that they can be misled and get deprived of the sound development of inner self esteem. Generation gap should be reduced to avoid these kinds of problems. A candid and friendly relation between two generations ensures the sound development of confidence and self esteem.

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Generally winners and failures can be broadly categorized into four major types of people:

1. Raw failure

2. Sophisticated failure

3. Pseudo successful

4. Real successful.

To reach the last one that is to be a real successful person we have to try and try until and unless we reach our goal, and achieve what we want in our life. If we cannot do this, we will become sophisticated failures. And of course we will have lots of reasons and excuses for which we could not reach our respective goals. A dissatisfaction or frustration may be generated inside our mind due to the failure of achieving our life goals. Then you face the question directly – “*what is better, a sophisticated failure or a successful person?*” Most of us have the experience of becoming failures in life at some point in time, but are we really fit for it? Just close your eyes and think of it “are we cut out for failures?” if so, then why? Why are we thinking in this way? This is only because of lack of self confidence and self esteem.

Do you think you have to earn a lot of money and property if you seek real success? And a sophisticated failure will be unable to occupy a place for himself in the crowd? You are absolutely wrong, if your answer is “YES”. A successful person does not have to earn money but prestige, honor, dignity, self confidence, self respect and self esteem; which have much greater values than money. But how can we achieve this? There are a number of ways to work on this and we can do that simply by sitting comfortably in our homes; we may not want to attend evening courses on self confidence and self-esteem. You may hesitate to ask someone to go out with you for those courses, because it can make the person doubtful about your self esteem.

Life usually “endows” us with much more reasons to be afraid of, than those which increase our courage. Many of us have self-esteem issues firmly rooted in our childhood experiences that hold us back and we fear to open ourselves up to others. Our superiors and others factors of environment might leave a mark on our mind that we are not gifted enough to reach the state of success and fame like the real successful people of present world. A string of “not enough’s” leave us with broken hearts and failed relationships that only add to the fear that perhaps those people were right and we really are not good for anything. These feelings only heap up every other day. But we have to understand that nothing is permanent in this world, no relation is permanent,

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and even we ourselves are not going to rule over or be subservient to others forever. We have to understand the transient nature of human beings and then only we can succeed in life. We have to learn how to face reality! If we are able to cope with this, then it will not at all be a matter of concern to build self confidence from within.

You will then answer yourself – *“yes; I want to be a successful person and I will”*. But what about people who have already tried these above-mentioned things and still have questions or concerns about their own self confidence and self esteem? Temporary fluctuations in our feelings of self confidence are absolutely natural in certain situations; we need not worry about that; they happen to almost all of us. However, if our self confidence is low for a long period of time or our mood shifts quite often, we might need to seek some professional help. One thing that might be happening is that we could never develop a good, solid concept of our **self** as we were growing up, and as a result, we gradually ceased to have a firm and positive idea of our **self** to build on, and to move ahead successfully in life.

A life coach may help you to re-attain your self confidence that you have lost somewhere in your life path during the struggle for achieving your own set of goals. I don't recommend any clinical help or medication, because I truly believe that your inner urge for self improvement and a little help from outside can easily solve all these imperfections of human life. Finally, another way to rebuild our self confidence and self esteem is to try doing and risking things that we've never tried before in life or that we had fear for. It is always a little bit of a challenge in doing new things in life and just the act of accepting these challenges with great courage, whether small or big, often increases our conviction in ourselves and gradually we realize that we can be a successful person in life.

When our self assessment depends upon others' judgment, we use to sacrifice all our sense of values for the sake of others appreciation. This means our self confidence is very volatile and we can only be sure of ourselves if others are feeling so. As such, we can never be successful and will only be sophisticated failures because actually we lack self confidence; what we have is a show or an air of self-confidence which does not last for a long time. This is what children do, because they do not have the inner resources and enough maturity as adults. An adult and matured person develops his self esteem gradually from his childhood days and maintains a sound balance in his life style.

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Maintaining our self esteem or self confidence might also require reminding ourselves of the things or qualities which we already have. You could just assume that other persons are stupid or wrong. And then you can completely ignore them along with their opinions towards you, because otherwise they could crush your self confidence. The problem with this approach is that you might have been able to find nuggets of truth in their criticisms and their views, and that would have been helpful for your own personal growth. Never mind, we are coming to that aspect later.

Criticism does not always have to be destructive and derogatory. Constructive criticism can be very hard to face and accept but if done; it is extremely useful for us. Let me give an example- Ms Pamela's daughter had heard that a very dear friend of hers was made fun of at school because of her bad choice of dresses and ways of talking to others. They thought that she had a mental problem. She wrestled with the situation for a long time before she finally decided to face her friends bravely. She was humiliated and embarrassed at first but she did succeed in making some changes in her way of talking and her wardrobe choices. Ultimately she decided to take a course on grooming and self-improvement, and succeeded to represent her true self and personality in public.

The same can be true if the criticisms are coming from a best friend, a boss, a family member or any other loved person. The key here is to consider the person who is criticizing. How are they saying it? Whether he or she is really your well-wisher or not? Constructive criticism can be intolerable at the outset but ultimately it will bring out the best in you and will save you from being a hypocrite and becoming a sophisticated failure in life.

In order to be a successful person you must incorporate the following things into your life:

1. Do things because you want to and expect nothing in return.  
Always accept the reality.
2. Try to remember this simple formula:  
*Positive thinking + Power thinking = Success.*
3. Never demand respect, command it.
4. Ask yourself this question repeatedly: "if I *can do* it, why *shouldn't I*?"
5. Don't pretend to be someone you are not. Represent who you truly are.
6. Work hard to improve your skills.
7. Learn to welcome challenges. Nothing good ever comes easy.
8. Increase your risk-taking capacity.
9. Hard work is not enough; it must be methodical, regular and rewarding.

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Self confidence is not an experience but it is a feeling that comes from within and is created from your previous experiences in life. Even a successful person can occasionally feel insecure from inside, as they are also normal; but what distinguishes them from many others, is their handling of their attitude to life; they know exactly what they want to do, and they accept problems in their lives as a new opportunity for learning and growth, and they search for solutions by investing time and energy.

Life is a journey full of situations and their resolutions as well. Can you count how many times in your life you really had thought that the problem you were facing was too massive to overcome and solve? But you still tried to win it over, and finally succeeded. Many years later, when you looked back, you were really surprised and wondered why it was a problem for you at all, and why you had to waste so much of time to fight it out! It is because your self confidence was at level zero at that time; and now you are a matured and a much different person. Remember that you are a different person from what you were twenty years hence. We are never the same; we keep changing as we grow.

Parents and elders play a vital role in shaping the character of growing children and building the self confidence within them. Most of the time, they use phrases like 'very creative', 'very naughty' or 'good for nothing' etc. for characterizing or classification. These phrases may create an absolute sense, good or otherwise, for that attribute in the mind of children. It is important for parents to exercise care about how children respond to their perceptions and how they modulate these beliefs on the basis of their own experiences as they grow up into an adult individual.

***Here are some effective exercises that will help you to relax, reduce stress and improve upon your self confidence.***

1. Do some morning exercises. You may jump up and down or skip rope for 5 minutes.
2. Take a deep breath in through your nose and then slowly exhale through your mouth. Close your eyes and listen to your breath.
3. Crack some jokes or watch funny bloopers and then laugh loudly.
4. Sing yourself a song while you are driving or when you are alone at home.
5. Walk away from the computer and stretch out every hour. Take a walk or grab a cup of coffee or tea.
6. Keep your toes rigid for sometime and then relax them. Now repeat the same with your fingers. As you repeat this cycle, you will feel your stress level reducing.
7. Listen to soft and soothing music; it has the power to elevate your mood.

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8. Exercise your creative expression. It could be a hobby or a passion. This will create time needed for self.
9. Concentrate on a positive thought every morning. You can think of the sun - which spreads its energy everywhere, or a flower - that has bloomed with so much of hidden possibilities - and you will feel peace, bliss and completeness within yourself.
10. When you are facing a challenging task, ask yourself: "Am I interpreting an easy work to be a tough one?" Then tell yourself "This task is actually much easier than I thought it was."
11. Express your feelings in front of others.
12. Generate a sense of self love from within. Look in the mirror and tell yourself "I love you".
13. Give yourself permission to accept and admit to your mistakes.
14. Give yourself permission to live a life of trial and error.
15. Reward yourself for all your accomplishments and successes whether it is a small or big one.

## Does self esteem even matter to you?

According to psychology, self esteem defines how much you are worth .It also defines how you acknowledge your ability and drawbacks.

- Self-esteem is the experience, which shows us whether or not we are appropriate or suitable in our life's tasks and situations.
- Self Confidence is our ability to think and to fight with the basic challenges of life with courage and perseverance.
- Confidence gives us the scope to be happy in our life with the feeling of being worthy of the fruit of our effort.

Self Esteem is the initial key to your happiness and well-being, as well as to your success in life.

Self esteem increases your confidence to a great extent. If you have confidence you will respect yourself and then only you will be able to respect others. You will improve your relationships and become happier in life. This is not a selfish goal as you will contribute more to society and share yourself more with the world and those around you. Ask yourself: *When was the last time that you truly felt proud of yourself? Do you really remember it? Do you walk down the street with self-esteem and confidence? Can you affirm yourself and get what you want from your boss, your friends or from your loved ones in life?*

*“Self-confidence gives you the freedom to make mistakes and cope with failure without feeling that your world has come to an end or that you are a worthless person.”*

Hence, your freedom and happiness is in your hands. Low esteem causes depression, unhappiness, insecurity, inferiority complex and low confidence level. Inner criticism, that pesky voice of dissatisfaction inside you, causes you to stammer at every challenge and challenges seem to be indomitable for you.

But does self esteem really matter to you? Or is it easier for you to follow the beaten path, lay back and take things as they come to you? Think. Do you really want to change your life? Is it not the perfect time that you experienced the radiance of self confidence and self esteem?

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It is the beginning of your own journey of life. You will gradually start to see a difference in yourself, as you work through each exercise and happiness will bloom in front of you. You truly deserve it. One of the most important investments to date that you can make is your personal growth – your self-esteem and self-confidence. But most of us recap hurtful messages over and over in our mind, which lowers our self confidence and self-worth.

We tell ourselves that ...

*We're worthless,*

*ugly,*

*dumb,*

*no good,*

*useless,*

*damaged goods,*

*stupid and unlovable,*

*merely a burden for others.*

Sounds familiar to you? These painful messages, whether true or not, become embedded in our minds and affect everything we do and everything we think of– from our school days to the workplaces and even into the romantic relationships in life....so here the question arises again, “does self esteem really matter to you?” Yes. And those messages that are ringing in your ears everyday, every hour, every second, are absolutely false, mistaken.

It's time to wipe off the dark clouds from your sky, and discover the beautiful, sexy, intriguing, intelligent, motivating, joyful, exciting and loving side of you. It's time to discover the many ways to erase your negative self-talk and negative attitude, and to start feeling the bliss of radiant self-confidence and self-esteem everyday. You must face every challenge in life. You are not going to be defeated by one failed attempt, are you? Your life will not come to an end at your first defeat – it is the beginning of your next victory-run. Everyone fails before they succeed in life. And that is why we say that “Failure is the pillar of success”.

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All you need is a different approach towards life.

Just ask yourself the following questions to check your self esteem.

### Questions Set 1

- Am I better off and more fortunate than other people?
- Am I happier than other people in life?
- Do I enjoy socializing?
- Do I deserve love and respect from others?
- Do I feel valued and needed to all?
- Is being 'I' important to me?
- Do I make friends easily and love to communicate with people?
- Can I accept criticism without feeling put down?
- Can I admit my mistakes in front of everyone when I am wrong?
- Do I always air my true feelings and emotions?
- Do I always speak up for myself and put my views forward?
- Am I a happy, cheerful and carefree person normally?

What were your answers to all of these?

Now ask yourself the following three questions again...

### Questions Set 2

- Do I need others to tell me whether I have done a good job or not?
- Am I bothered about what others think of my opinion?
- Do I need others' approval to feel good for myself?

If you have answered "Yes" to all the questions in the Set-1 and "No" for all the questions in the Set-2, you are bubbling with self-confidence and self-esteem!

Remember: When you show this confidence,

- You become more attractive to everyone around you

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- You become a more loving and trustworthy friend
- You become a true and a better lover

Learn from others. What are the good qualities they have and how are they doing it? Avoid making the same mistake again and again in life but do not limit yourself by assuming that you will fail. Do not let the fear of committing mistakes deter you. Before that, try to succeed. Try again; you are wiser and stronger than you think. Have faith in yourself; do not be entrapped in past memories and do not brood over your earlier failures! Let the past bury its head.

Another interesting thing is that we often forget several things that we had done well. Continued frustration, attempting things that we have difficulty doing in and negative attitude while attempting anything; can lead to feelings of inaccuracy and inadequacy. It does not take long to realize that these feelings have ruined our self confidence completely. We should make a list of the things that we do well and try to do at least one of these things everyday.

It has been noticed that although this method of increasing our self confidence and self esteem sounds simple and easy, it is often very effective. By making a list like this, we sometimes can rediscover those very likable qualities in ourselves that we had all along simply ignored.

Another thing we can do when we are feeling low or upset is to take some time to do something nice for ourselves; pamper ourselves by doing something we find enjoyable or something we really like to do. We can take the time to treat ourselves with affection and kindness. Never think that “I am the best” but think that “I am second to none”. To develop or to build self esteem, never feel pity of yourself because self pity is a crime. Just stop thinking of yourself as a ‘second-to’ being. Forget the monotonous thought of “If only I was richer... if only I was thinner...if I only...” and so on. Accepting your true self that is what you are, is the first step towards self-improvement and an enhanced self esteem.

We need to stop comparing ourselves to others in any respect. We will find out in the end that we’ve got 10 more strong reasons to estimate and envy them. We all have our insecurities in life. Nobody is perfect in this world. We always desire that we had better things, better features, better body parts, better life etc. But we need not be always perfect to be happy, else we will become selfish. **Knowing yourself fully is the basis of self-esteem and building self confidence as well as getting on with your personal**

**development.** Yes, it is not easy to really understand a human being fully. And, to understand others, we first of all need to understand ourselves and then only we can gain self esteem and self confidence. It is always a wonderful feeling to hold on to the assets that you already have, that you already possess, realizing that those are a few of the things you once wished for in your life.

Always try and work towards getting what you want; else you will have to accept what you get in life. As a great quote goes, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear”, is it not right for you as well? We are all here to learn our lessons of life. Our parents, school-teachers, friends, colleagues, neighbors... they are all our teachers; we have lots to learn from them. When we open our doors for self-improvement, self-esteem and self-confidence, we increase our chances to head to the road of success and the road of prosperity, name and fame if that is the dream. Man was never created to live a solitary life in a big city. We become depressed, mentally dissatisfied and physically ill, as we become more and more lonely, isolated, and disconnected in this huge world. Even a deep connection to a source of theology, in other words our dependence on religion is not going to heal our souls, once it is broken. Man must learn to connect with each other at a deeper heart to heart level, get much closer to each other and with true feelings and understanding.

### ‘Excusitis’

Look around you - you will always find some people in your surrounding who are storehouses of excuses. They always have something ready at the tip of their tongue to defend *why they must fail*.

I don't have time ... I am too unlucky ... I am too busy ... I am too lazy ... I am too old (or I am too young) ... I don't have the \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank) ... I am not strong enough (or too weak) ... I am not courageous enough ... I wish I had a better upbringing/education ... I have a problem with my spouse ... I can't resist chocolate ... My metabolism is too slow ... This idea won't work for me ... The list is virtually endless and is only limited by the imagination of these individuals. These are all excuses, and the person making such excuses actually believes them to be true. As a result, these failure-oriented people always look for reasons and evidence to support their belief.

*“People spend too much time finding other people to blame, too much energy finding excuses for not being what they are capable of being, and not enough energy putting*

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*themselves on the line, growing out of the past, and getting on with their lives.” - J. Michael Straczynski.*

Each of these qualities listed above are the possible effects of a temporary problem called “Excusitis”. It keeps you down and holds you steadfast in mediocrity, in a life devoid of creativity and success. People, who are not creative, find it hard to bring about any form of success in their life. They allow themselves to start believing that they must fail. Their brains always look for the virtual comfort of an excuse to fail. A life coach may help them to get out of the problem quickly.

Remember, your beliefs determine your reality. If you believe you are not worth 10,000 per month then that will be the reality for you. Your brain will automatically start looking for all sorts of 'reasons' to 'prove' that you're not really worth it. But if you *choose* to believe that you are worth 10,000 per month and more, if you *choose* to believe that you always do a great job at whatever you do, then that becomes true for you. In the process, something amazing happens - the secret to achieve such great goals presents itself to you when you start thinking in this way.

And this, my friend, is the cure for Excusitis. I strongly recommend you to be true to yourself from today. Refuse to make excuses. It is your life. Choose to take the responsibility for it. Develop an “I can, I will, and I am worth” attitude. Choose the thoughts and beliefs that support your goals, and justify success. Shut off your mind from negative thoughts that pave the path for failure. The moment you notice such a thought budding inside you, recognize it and replace it promptly with a strong reason why you can do it.

If your goal is to double your sales this year in your business, refuse to entertain thoughts of why you cannot do it. Start by writing down 10 reasons WHY YOU CAN make it possible. Once you let that become your primary belief, the “HOW” part follows automatically.

Curing yourself of this negative behavior of Excusitis is one of the foremost and most effective steps to achieve a high level of confidence and self-esteem.

## Developing your self-esteem

***“Incessant persistence will always pay, warding off anything that comes on your way”.***

Self esteem is indispensable. But how will you develop it?

Just follow these easy steps:

- 1. Stop thinking and feeling as if you're a failure**, because you're **NOT**. How can you expect others to accept you if YOU yourself are uncomfortable under your skin?
- 2. When you see attractive, sexy models on TV, think more on self-improvement and self-esteem, not self-pitying.** Self-acceptance is not just about having great features, or beautiful looks. You just concentrate on your inner beauty which you already have.
- 3. When people feel down and low about themselves, help them to move up.** You don't go down with them. They'll pull you down and both of you will end up feeling inferior in life.

But in order to develop self-esteem, be careful not to be arrogant, proud, haughty and cranky. If you become so, then these vices will pull you down and will isolate you from others.

A proud person wants to assert his importance to all. He wants to broadcast what he is; he highlights his own qualities to a greater extent than what they really are; in short, he has a tendency to oversell himself all the time.

You will find many diamond-like stones in the market. Does that mean that diamonds are coming cheap nowadays? Does a genuine diamond need to scream “Buy me?” “I am a diamond with genuine glitter; I am the only valuable gemstone!” NO. People know the true value of a diamond.

Similarly, if you keep harping about your qualities, you will surely feel a temporary sense of pride of what you are, but this can never increase your self esteem and value. Instead, you will end up diminishing your innate value, as you become isolated from the society and others around you will laugh at your hollow bragging.

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Practicing the following will help you develop your self esteem:

**1. Face your fears bravely** - Challenges may be scary but it is only your fears that make them so.

***"Life's challenges are not supposed to paralyze you, they're supposed to help you discover who you are."* (Bernice Johnson Reagon)**

**2. DO NOT forget your failures –**

You can and must benefit from your failures. Look at the positive side of it. Failure may help you to identify your limitations. Therefore, you can further work on it to improve your skills. Don't give up hope, keep on trying and be passionate about whatever you do. A great philosopher said, **"Arise awake and stop not till the goal is reached."**

**3. Know what you want in life and ask for it.** – Always be assertive. You deserve your dreams to come true!

**4. Reward yourself when you succeed after a tough battle** – No-one else will reward you; so reward yourself. Everything will be easier when you take time to help yourself. Make a list of all your successes and revisit that often. Try to remember the lessons you learned on the way, and progressively amend your mistakes.

**5. Talk and communicate** - We often make assumptions about a situation or a person, which are not always true. Your attitude can be negatively affected by this. So, if you have any doubt or question, ask. Do not hesitate and do not assume that you always know the true reason. Interactions can smoothen a lot of rough edges, resolve a lot of misconceptions. This in turn will boost your confidence.

**6. Don't feel defeated** - Try something else which you can. You are not going to be defeated by one single failed attempt. Try and try. A baby can not walk just after birth, but gradually it learns to do so and during the learning process the baby falls several times. Ultimately he can walk. *There are two kinds of failures: those who thought and never did, and those who did and never thought* (Laurence J. Peter).

Rejection and criticism always hurt. Whether it is the other kids making fun of you at school or your friend betraying you, or just receiving a harsh performance evaluation from your boss, or getting turned down by the girl whom you asked for a night out, or being rejected from a job interview. I would not tell you not to take it to heart, because

it is personal and it is obvious that this will remain as a painful memory. After all, you are the one who was ridiculed, criticized or rejected. No matter how much confident you are a small part of you that winces every time someone rejects you or criticizes you, makes you feel underestimated. But again, you are the one, who has to get rid of that awful feeling. **A life coach then may help you to accept the judgment of others positively and condition yourself for necessary improvement. Positive criticism may be beneficial but it entirely depends on how you accept it.**

### **What will you do to make yourself feel better and confident after a setback?**

Self confidence exercises are not physical exercises but it is a way of building inner strength. Here are some.

- Listen to your inner voice, what your heart says, and follow it. It will never betray you and knows what is really best for you. Remember your 'heart' speaks out your own common sense.
- Talk happily & cheerfully with full confidence to every person you come across everyday.
- Just think only of the best, work only for the best and expect only the best because you deserve nothing less than the best, as you are the best.
- Care about the feelings, happiness and success of others and offer them all the possible help and encourage them.
- Do not dwell possessively on your past mistakes and painful incidents. Focus on your successes to encourage yourself for greater achievements in the future, so that, you do not bare any regret in life.
- Always give your best in whatever you do, so that you can be proud of your efforts *irrespective of the outcome*.
- When you help someone, never expect anything in return.
- Do not be afraid to go out on a limb, because ultimately it will give you the best result.
- The hardest challenge in your life is to be YOURSELF in this world, where everyone is trying to make you SOMEBODY ELSE and are pushing you in the crowd where you can never identify yourself.

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- You can never be lonely if you do not really assume so and feel so. Never think that you are secluded and be your own company.
- Be creative, never imitate anyone. It is childish and takes you nowhere.

Nothing in this world has the power to motivate you unless you yourself have the will to do so. It is your ownership - develop your self esteem yourself. I can show you the path, now you have to decide for yourself – whether you want to walk along or deviate and lose out.

**To boost your self esteem to an all-time high**, just follow these simple tips:

- Just smile and smile. Try it. It is not tough.
- Sing aloud to yourself, as if no one is hearing you.
- Dance in front of others; do not hesitate to do so.
- Do things that you like to do which make you happy.
- Try to learn something about yourself everyday.
- Do not cheat – you will end up cheating yourself.

## Motivation: The Core of Self Confidence

Pain and suffering may sometimes be the reason why people change drastically. For a student, getting poor grades in class makes him realize that some improvement is necessary in his learning process. For an employee, getting reprimanded from the Boss makes him realize the need to be more attentive towards work. Bad debts remind us of our incapability to look for a source of income and our loopholes in life. Being humiliated gives us the courage and strength to speak up and fight for ourselves to save our face from the next embarrassment, which may hurt us even more. All these are negative situations that may pave the way towards a positive goal.

In cases like these, we need some motivation to stand up and act – to respond to the call of the moment. Motivation may come from anyone, be it from your parents, your friends or from your life partner. *“Motivation is the source of innovation”*. These are all external sources of motivation, which we naturally seek at times of need.

But during difficult times, when you are subconsciously groping for some motivation, but have no external sources available, what do you do? The answer is really simple – motivate yourself! Look for your inner sources.

### How can you motivate yourself?

Here are some tips you can use:

#### **The top 10 success-mantras of self-motivated people**

- 1. Put in determined, planned effort to achieve your dreams:** Avoid negative people, things and places around you. They will pull you back.
- 2. Believe only in yourself** and in whatever you do, have faith in yourself.
- 3. Consider things on every aspect of life:** Motivation comes from strong determination. To be able to understand life, you should feel it and love it. A successful person is a complete person.
- 4. Do not give in and also do not give up:** Make motivation your stairs for moving high in life.

- 5. Enjoy every moment of life:** Work as if you do not want any money, dance as if nobody's watching you, love as if you never got hurt and cried, learn as if you'll remember forever and paint as if your painting will speak. Live in the Present. Motivation takes place when people are happy and cheerful, and have tremendous urge to do well in their life and work.
- 6. Family and Friends:** They are life's greatest treasures. Do not lose sight of them and never ignore them, and they will be with you forever.
- 7. Always give more than enough:** Where does motivation and self-improvement actually take place? Is it at work or at home or at school? It is where you feel happy and can give extra effort to your work. Try to give more than what was expected from you.
- 8. Learn to love yourself at first:** Now is it not easy? Before loving others make sure that you love yourself.
- 9. Make things happen:** Motivation is when you dream and fight so that your dreams become true.
- 10. Never lie, cheat or steal from anyone:** Always be fair in life. Never try to cheat anyone as it will bring you down. Even if you do not get caught, it is sure to bring down your self-esteem.

Change will come, whether you like it or hate it, whether you accept it or not. At some point or other, we are all going to experience CHANGE, as *change is the only constant factor*. It is during these times of change, when your true character comes out and your ability to motivate yourself in the face of new challenges is put to test.

**Happy people do not just accept changes; they embrace it and live it-** To be happy in life you have to accept all changes cheerfully, as they come to you. People experience many unexpected and unwelcome situations in their lifetime which can bring about drastic changes in the course of their lives. We learn how to manage grief and anguish, when we experience pain e.g., when we are betrayed by someone very close to us – the consequences might bring radical changes in the course of life. When do we really decide on a change in diet? When the best pair of jeans in the wardrobe refuses to fit and there is a look of despair in the mirror. When do we realize and decide to stop smoking? When a medical report shows signs of concern and the doctor raises his eyebrows and dryly dictates a long list of lifestyle restrictions. Change is hardly easy, and

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it is rarely welcome. Most people think and feel this way because it is not easy to accept any change. *It is the natural tendency of the human mind to resist any change, so it prefers to let things go on as they are.*

In order to embrace change and move on, the most important fuel you will need is motivation – more of it from inside yourself than from the outer world. Motivation gives birth to self-confidence, self esteem and opens the door to endless creativity. If you are motivated enough, you can achieve anything you want in life.

Good friends can be a great source of motivation. Friends communicate, share and motivate each other in many ways – simply because this leverages the basic human urge to socialize and build relationships. Usually good friends have complementary qualities – which enable them to fall back on each other for motivation and reassurance at times of change.

Do you really have time for yourself? How much time do you honestly invest in your mental well-being? The global financial crisis has introduced even more unwelcome changes in lives of many people – all of which lead to stress. Spend enough time focusing inside your Self. Apply the simple techniques of self-motivation.

But if you ask me - this is the time to buckle up and get going! The winds of change usually carry innumerable seeds of new opportunities, which less-motivated people choose to overlook. A negative mind will only look for an excuse to fail. A positive mind will automatically find reasons to get excited and motivated to start afresh!

I know a successful lady who was the Managing Director of a large multinational company. She had almost everything in her life, but deep down in her mind, she was lonely. She did not have anybody to share her feelings with, and her work-packed schedule kept her away from parties and social gatherings. People called her a 'self serving' woman. Her personal life was depressed and unorganized. She was getting addicted to pain-killers and her self-respect was fast decaying. When I met her, she was clearly heading for a psychological disaster – gradually confining into a painful self-styled social exile.

I suggested her to take out at least half an hour each day – to be dedicated to herself, so that she could start associating with other people whom she found comfortable with. The idea motivated her, and gradually helped build-up her self esteem to a new height.

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It is but human nature to appreciate the qualities of anyone when they meet. This lady will command attention in parties and social gatherings by virtue of her professional position and her corporate grooming. She will be appreciated and complimented by others and this will build her self confidence and self esteem as the words will motivate her.

But how can you do it? Just be practical, look at yourself in the mirror and you can answer this question. Just follow these two simple methods to build your self confidence:

**1. Watch carefully how you sit and stand.** Lift up your chin, pull back your shoulder slightly, make your stomach in and chest out and tell yourself that you are going to run, ready to climb the peak of the Alps and to face every challenge bravely.

**2. Just have a look on the way you have dressed.** Have you ever had a glance on the way you have dressed? Just have a look and tell me how you are feeling. If you look great, you feel great. If you feel great, you are great.

These methods seem to be simple, but they are very powerful. These will help you in building up your self confidence to a new level you never thought of attaining. Self confidence exercises are not always difficult to perform and they can be done comfortably in an easy manner as stated above.

### **Value Every Day**

Consider each and every day as an important day in your life. This will motivate you to work faster, produce better and higher quality output, in whatever field you work. Furthermore, a tremendous flow of positive energy will generate within yourself by performing better - will motivate you further to continue improving every day. Respond to the voice within yourself: this will help you identify your goals and priorities. Get started before other negative thinkers stop you from achieving our goals.

### **Communicate MORE**

If you are an introvert, start proactively communicating with people as much as you can; this will boost your self confidence. If you are already an outspoken individual, then actively develop the art of listening. Listening is extremely important – this will help you understand others' viewpoints and act with sensibility and ownership.

As you learn the techniques of self-motivation, you will also gradually learn to include the word 'extra' in your dictionary. You will put in that *extra* bit of effort to create and maintain a more positive environment around yourself. You will learn to give *extra* time to yourself and your family. Before long, you will realize that you have gained that extra bit of confidence to touch the sky and achieve everything you dreamed of. You will realize that you have made yourself your own philosopher, your own guide and your own best friend.

### Creation Pays, Not Imitation

***“True creativity happens when intuitive imagination brings forth the previously unknown and unimagined”***

Look for something that you have in your possession as a unique gift. Ask yourself – *“What can I do really well, much better than anybody else I know of?”* Listen to your heart, don't be afraid. The answer can be anything; don't filter your finding, and don't hold yourself back to explore further what your mind comes up with.

#### **But the question is – what is Creativity?**

What is it that produces creativity, and leads to innovation? It is a mental and to some extent, social process involving the generation of new ideas and concepts as well as new associations of the creative mind between existing ideas and original thoughts of your own. An alternative concept of creativity is that it is the act of making something new as well as inventing new things and boosting your knowledge. It is a quality that you are endowed with at birth, and we call it creative talent later on in life. Creativity also depends on your enthusiasm – the amount of enthusiasm is always directly proportional to your resultant creativity.

Creativity does not dwell in a mind that is blocked with negative orientation that apprehends failure, or a mind that is busy imitating others and always trying to be someone else. In fact, when your mind is in the *“imitate others”* mode, you lose your power of thinking freely and start believing what others are telling you. You will be an easy target for external influence – and since our normal environment is predominantly negative, you become negatively influenced surprisingly fast. DO NOT let this happen to you. You are carrying the important responsibility to protect yourself from the urge to imitate and from external influence. It is indeed your duty to hone your own creativity.

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Whether you are crystallizing a new idea, writing a new book or inventing something new – it is your creativity that will matter: this, above all, will help you to walk a bit ahead from others.

There are some differences between creativity and innovation. Creativity refers to producing new ideas and new thoughts while innovation refers to both producing and applying those ideas.

Creativity is the mother of innovation. Innovation is constantly needed to express and realize your creative ideas. It means that for innovation, creativity is a necessary ingredient to start with.

Creativity also depends on a psychological condition – it is said that creativity is the result of inner frustration resulting in a tremendous urge to earn love, fame and name.

Creative professions include designing, music, marketing, writing and so on. Not all people are primarily creative professionals but a majority of them are secondarily creative. When a painter is filling in his painting with colors, it's his creativity at work, and he will pour his imagination into it.

The five steps of the cycle of creativity are as follows:

1. **Preparation:** The first step, where an individual gets focused on a particular subject of his interest and thinks of it.
2. **Incubation:** The second step, where the subject or thought strikes his mind. The thought continues to grow in the mind but there is no external revelation of it.
3. **Intimation:** The third step, where the person looks for a possible way of representation and believes that a proper solving idea is not a far cry.
4. **Illumination:** The fourth and most important step - where the solving idea bursts forth and conscious awareness can be observed.
5. **Verification:** The last and final step in the cycle of creativity, where the idea is elaborated and then finally made ready for practical application.

**Self confidence is the key that can unleash your natural creativity.**

To perform any task whether it is creative or inventive, your brain must function properly, like a well-oiled machine. One must be at the top of one's physical and mental form to perform best. To make this possible, here are some simple tips:

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1. If you are tired but unable to sleep because of stress then practice the tip Samuel Untermyer practiced years ago, leave your bed and read a book until you feel sleepy.
2. Remember - you will not die if you cannot sleep. But you will die sooner if you start thinking why you cannot sleep.
3. Practice meditation everyday. Spend about half an hour alone, without worries, totally relaxed and breathing in long and deep breaths– this not only boosts your creativity and fuels innovation, but also helps in achieving an uncluttered state of mind, a sort of mental equilibrium that helps you work in a calm, efficient & organized manner.

Creativity has two streams of thinking, ***convergent thinking*** and ***divergent thinking***. Convergent thinking refers to a single correct solution of a problem, while divergent thinking refers to multiple different answers for a single problem. Both Divergent and Convergent thinking are drivers of creativity.

Many researches have been taken up on the subject of creativity. Such researches have uncovered several aspects of the relation between creativity and working emotions. It has been established that creativity is directly proportional to the positive emotions at work. If you are complimented by your peers or your family, if you are happy, excited, satisfied, energized and motivated – your creativity will be at its peak for the next few days – or as long as you can consciously preserve your happy mood. The opposite is also true, i.e., if you are feeling depressed, longing, sad, unloved, homesick, de-motivated or looked down upon by the people surrounding you, your creativity will dip into an all time low. While your positive emotions tend to promote creativity within your brain, your negative mood results in acute *tunnel-vision*, which will make you focus only on your anxieties; other things tend to be pushed out of your brain's focus at that moment.

Invest conscious effort to preserve a healthy balance of happy moods within yourself – and your brain will be able to foster a perennial fountain of creativity.

### **Imitation**

We all try to imitate all that we find good in others, especially when we meet somebody with an influential and impressive personality. We are influenced by people whom we choose as our role models, and we tend to imitate almost everything we see in them.

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Imitation is an instinctive human behavior, and results in lots of "monkey see - monkey do" learning. Imitation does nothing to encourage creative thinking; neither does it require any creative ability. You learn other people's ideas and techniques through imitation. When you blindly imitate others, you unconsciously block your own ability to think and innovate independently.

### ***"Imitation is the greatest enemy of creativity"***

The nature of imitation is too powerful a human instinct, and too much opposed to creativity. The instinct to imitate is so natural and overpowering, it can easily overcome your instinct to imagine and innovate. Innovation takes a lot more conscious effort and does not come naturally or instinctively.

It is relatively easy for anybody to learn by imitating their role models. We all start our lives as toddlers, imitating role models – usually one of our older siblings or parents. This is why imitating is a natural instinct. Who was your role model when you were in junior school? And who was your role model when you were in college? It is indeed natural for you to have different role models as you grow from a child into a teenager, a young man/lady and an adult.

However, inherently creative people go beyond imitating their role models and their mentors. They do this by virtue of critical review of their own behavior – by consciously and continuously reviewing their productive output and the method they followed. Then they search for alternative methods to try– which results in innovative ways. Here is where creativity plays an important role.

Remember – always be what you are. Don't try to imitate others; in the long run, this will result in a subconscious guilt within your self, and you will be left feeling like a cheater inside your skin. Be and act in your original, inimitable manner – and this will unleash the boundless creativity that is dormant inside your fantastic mind.

Your aim should be to search, locate, nurture and expose your innate talent and creativity.

## **Motivating Yourself Spiritually**

In your journey so far with me, you have learnt the 'what's and 'why's of self-esteem, self-confidence, motivation and creativity. You have also learnt some tips and exercises for developing your self esteem and confidence, motivating yourself and fostering your

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innate creativity. Now we will explore an effective method of motivation that runs on the power of a never-exhausting battery – your spiritual self!

How many times has this happened to you that, after you have started-up with a particular task, progressed for some time with a lot of enthusiasm, and just before it could reach its desired completion, lost all enthusiasm to pursue it further? You suddenly lost all your interest in the project. An enormous amount of your time and money had already been wasted by that time. Has it happened to you ever, that when you needed to do something very badly at the earliest, and the deadlines were nearing like a bullet train at full steam, but it *just got impossible* for you to pull yourself up and put your mind into the work at hand? Why does this happen? Why don't you get the required energy to get down to work when it is necessary? What is it that always holds you from behind, whenever you want to do something really well? Maybe you wanted to reconcile with your ill-tempered neighbor, or to go patch-up with your old friend with whom you had a sort of misunderstanding. Once the flow of energy is broken, you find it impossible to make a fresh head start. Then follow a bout of the blues – a few days of bad mood, that sour feeling in your mouth.

Are you still wondering why you could neither diagnose nor cure this nagging malady, even after reading all the self-help and motivational books you could lay your hands on?

There is something in every one of us, that stops us from doing something worthwhile and acting on it NOW ... whether it is for ourselves or for others. Picture this - most of your conscious time is engulfed with worries of future security and planning. You struggle and manage to squeeze out time to get along your demanding everyday routine, and in that process, completely forget about your today. While you speculate on whether there will be a sunny morning tomorrow, you tend to ignore the bright sun shining today. While you are too focused to ensure a rewarding future for yourself and your family, you neglect today's happy moments that have stretched their arms to embrace you longing for your attention. Sounds familiar?

***"It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand battles. Then the victory is yours; it cannot be taken away from you."***

Most of the time, we get so used to *surviving*, we forget how to *live*. We become surrounded with the ever increasing heaps of "NO" and close all the doors and windows that let the light of "YES" come in. We don't get to see the light, because we ourselves keep the windows shut. But just think for once; were we like this all along our life?

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Remember when you were a little kid – there was ONLY one chief feeling, HAPPINESS. We used to float on the waves of positivism and whatever we were asked to do, the answers were invariably “YES”. All these years, as you grew up, what happened to you that you lost your spontaneous smile, as you used to in our joy-filled childhood? How did the “responsibilities” of life become so big, that their shadow completely eclipsed your in-born happiness, the burdens of life robbed us off our innocent smile? Why can’t we trust others, why do we maintain a cold distance from even our closest ones?

If we have to admit that we are bound by the social duties and time barriers and cannot return to our childhood once again however we crave for, we can at least do something to make our present life as enjoyable and hassle-free as we had it at that time. We can do that by opening our mind. If we can spread out our hands to the clear, blue sky and want to embrace the fairy like white clouds once more, then there would hardly be any trouble to frighten us by showing its red eyes. Yes, I admit that it is much better said than done. But at least we can try, we can start to try. I cannot resist myself from quoting Martin Luther King, Jr., who said, "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step."

This first step would be your founding step towards achieving the spiritual motivation. Remember, spiritual motivation hardly has anything related to religiousness. You don’t need to belong to a particular religious community or any community at all. It is sometimes said that the atheists are the most spiritually gifted, because they do not confuse the essence of spiritual self-lifting with the concept of God. And the greatest devotee may also be devoid of any spiritual realization at all. But, let us not get into the dispute now. All that is important at this time is – in order to rejuvenate yourself and your inner spirit, you need to know yourself. And to know yourself, you have to open the eyes of your mind.

Let us not be enigmatic. Try to imagine yourself as an integral part of the universe. When you had come to this world, your mind was as pure as a dew drop on a rose petal and any mark of experience was yet to scratch on the white page of your mind. But as you started to grow older, your mind kept on preserving all the records of experiences in its pages on a regular basis, and consequently, you forgot about the first white page you started with. STOP. Find out and keep that first clear, unwritten page and imagine it in front of your eyes. Believe me; it is not that difficult as you probably think. To do this, you have to have faith in yourself. As soon as you have 100% faith in yourself, you would discover – there is nothing in this universe, which can stop you from doing so, because you are the inherent part of the universe. As you are residing inside the universe, the

universe is also residing within you and this relation is older than even the oldest of relations heard of as of now.

It is at this juncture, you would feel that an unprecedented, unseen and unfelt joy has filled your mind. You would have no fear, no anxiety, no tension, no apprehension and your entire world will resonate with the word "YES" from every corner of your conscience. Newfound energy will start bubbling up within you, and you will experience the jovial impetus of a five-year-old in every work you embark on. The dishwasher and the vacuum-cleaner would look like the trekking shoe and the speed boat. Everything around you will suddenly seem to be full of wonderful possibilities. And not only that, the tasks that you thought were impossible, will seem like a child's play. You will find fun and enjoyment in everything you do and life would come to you in a way you had never discovered before. Your every worry would vanish from your mind, as you would be able to recognize them as insignificant in your great journey of life. You will realize that you are not a small entity that has very less contribution to the goings on of everyday life. You will realize what you have believed all your life --- that as you are dependent on others and are incomplete without them for this "poor" existence of yours; so dependent and incomplete is the whole world without YOU. But in order to achieve this remarkable state of mind, you must have to take the *first step*.

***"Activity is not achievement. It is not enough to rush about beginning a lot of things and somehow keeping busy. A well-spent life is one that rounds out what it has begun."***

Now that you have taken the first step, it is time you should keep on stepping up. If you are overwhelmed by the initial surge of ecstasy that you received after your call to the universal wholeness, then before long, you would end up returning to your old cauldron of sorrow and worry. To keep the incessant flow of happiness going, you will have to put in your unrelenting efforts. It is a long process, but it is sure to pay dividends you have never dreamt of.

In this process, you may find yourself confused or suspicious about the truthfulness of your endeavor. Let me show you the technique that you can use to check whether you are deviating from the right path of life's goal. *Listen to your own heartbeat every time you decide to do something. If you can feel that your heart is expanding to its full extent while you are consenting to a particular task, you can be sure, that you are doing the right.* Whereas, if you feel confined, constricted or congested within your heart, then it is time to change your decision; you are not doing the right thing. It is this time, when

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you cannot get response from within you and ultimately get disconnected from the universal flow of happiness. Always refer to your heart; it will never lie to you.

But wait. I am not telling you to ask your heart for permission before performing each task, and decline to do if your heart says 'No'. No, you cannot live your entire life like this. What I want to convey to you is that you should be more sincere and careful in doing the tasks that are not in your "My Favorite Tasks" list. You will easily and passionately perform all those things that you like doing, but the challenge remains with those that you hate, or are scared to do. We cannot fancy getting to do everything good in our mundane life, but we must keep on going with life, and in the process we may need to carry out some tasks which are not exactly in our favorite list. Remember life is not a bed of roses; it has its share of thorns too! And also remember – after every dark night the sun shines and most dark clouds have a silver lining. You will cheerfully and successfully pass the rough phases of life; your dreams will sprout out new leaves of hope from its branches. You will enrich yourself from life's vast experiences and overcome the hard phases with new hope and optimism.

As you recognize your being as an intrinsic part of the whole universe beyond your mere physical existence, your dreams will rush to get your 'Midas' touch and bear real fruits. You will radiate an aura of positive energy that will reflect upon everyone around you, and would illuminate your own presence.

*"Enlightenment is all about a deep understanding that there is no problem. And then with no problem to solve, what will you do? You start living. You eat, you sleep, you love and you laugh you work, you sing and you dance, you give and you help -- what else is there to do?"*

While you work your way towards reaching this coveted state of that eternal serenity and peace, there remains hardly any problem or concern to give a thought to or to ponder over for hours or even days. It is that time in your life that you will actually start to live it afresh. And when I say "living afresh", let me assure you - you will love your life like never before. You will madly fall in love with your life.

### **Start now.**

I can recommend you some easy ways that will help you witness and enjoy the greatest wonder of the universe – your LIFE.

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Whenever you are starting off on a new task, ask yourself – “How would I do this if I had to finish this work within the time period of INFINITY?” Try to implement this plan within your bounded time limit.

If your mind reverberates with thoughts like “I should do this”, “I have to do this” or “I must do this now”, then you will evoke a negative flow of energy, and this negativism will come into your way of achieving success. Give yourself choices, take your time. The universe is timeless; it will not mind however long you take to attune yourself with it.

Grab an opportunity as soon as it comes your way. Do not wait for the next better opportunity; you may never get it at all. If your mind gives you a green signal to do something, dive into it with your entire body and soul. When you make up your mind to put it into something, you instantly invoke the eternal flow of universal energy to guide you and to enrich you. You get infused with this universal energy, which inspires you to take the activity further to a higher level. You may be suddenly faced with numerous opportunities at a time, but do not hesitate to respond to them. If you are synchronized with the universal flow of energy, then no matter how much of workload you have, you will always find the incessant flow of energy running within you and motivating you to do more and more. The word “tired” will disappear from your vocabulary, and “excitement” would find a new definition within you.

Now, come back to your own desires. If you want to feel the universal energy flowing through your whole body and mind, *you must learn how to cut out the distractions that hijack your attention away from the task that needs your focus.* If you can focus the universal energy into doing something that you really want to do, the outcome will be simply miraculous, and you will be surprised at the unbelievable progress you would achieve. Your ability to multi-task and to get others positively involved in your work will further enhance. The result will be magical.

But if you constantly engage this energy into doing something that you do not have a liking for, you would end up wasting it. Moreover, this misdirected energy will create chaos in your mind, like an unpredictable hurricane – it has massive power, immeasurable potential, but it only knows how to destroy.

In the beginning, you might be confused how to realize this boundless supreme energy within yourself. Let me tell you as a starting point, you have to flush out all clutter and noise from your mind caused by stress, anxiety and inferiority/superiority complexes. Unconditional self acceptance and self love

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can help you to do this. Then put some conscious effort to calm down your mind - it is the source of all our emotions. Meditation is a fruitful method that can certainly help you to remove unnecessary strings of thought that lead to the avoidable noise in your brain. An honest and dedicated practice will help you to stay ahead on this path and utilize the inner energy to improve your mental health and overall life style.

***“An invincible determination can accomplish almost anything ... and in this lies the great distinction between great men and little men.”***

## Depression among Teenagers Lacking Self Confidence

Childhood and adolescence are the growing years of a person. Childhood and adolescence education and experiences form the basis on which you can live the rest of your life happily. Therefore, it is necessary to develop your self confidence and self esteem during these phases. Unfortunately some of the teenagers remain unable to build their confidence and self esteem properly during the growing phase of their life. As a result, they get depressed whenever they face failure or the lack of self esteem. Their inability seems to be a curse for their life.

The depressed teenagers find their life worthless. They start doing negative self talk. Negative self talk can further reduce their confidence and harm the self esteem a lot. Loneliness is a strong reason that intensifies the anxiety and teenage depression. Some misguiding media and the environment may contribute to it considerably. They move a far away from the line of harmony and become a part of the environmental noise.

Teen depression stems primarily due to lack of self confidence. Special care should be taken from the very beginning, when a child is born, so that his self esteem does not get hindered during his growing years. A child will definitely receive a setback if he or she is not supported and not appreciated by his parents. A child feels very strongly about whether he or she is supported by the family or not. Parents must take sufficient time out to spend with their growing children, shower care, love and affection to their children. Parents must spend as much time as they can with their children to share their thoughts and emotions. It is important to appreciate and reward your children, if they do something good, e.g. draw a new picture or score better grades in class. This simple support will ensure that his self-esteem gets a healthy boost. A child's self confidence will be bolstered if his parents behave with him as friends. The key is mutual respect and transparency – parents should be careful not to have a gap between what they preach and what they practice.

Teenagers often lack the power of resistance or self control. They look for instant gratification, and get depressed when they do not get what they want instantly. The very first step to control and prevent such behavior is to train their mind with the virtues of self-control.

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Positive thinking is an inseparable part for developing your self esteem. Therefore, to attain some positive feelings in your life and to overcome the stress and anxiety of daily hustle and bustle, practice the following easy steps:

1. At the end of each day, before going to bed, write down 5 good & positive things that you have experienced today. *In the beginning this will be fairly tough – as a human mind tends to remember negative feelings and memories more strongly than the positive ones. With some practice, this simple technique will train your brain to remember positive memories, emotions and feelings and ignore the negative ones.* This has very powerful results and you will start experiencing the benefits within weeks of practice.
2. At the end of each day, before going to bed, write down at least 1 point where you think you need to improve upon, e.g. time management. Track yourself after a few weeks how you have improved on this.
3. Practice some simple sports activity – Sports have enormous power of healing. Don't you feel on top of the world after a good run, scoring a goal, or after releasing steam from your body?
4. Connect to nature as often as you can. Maintain your room airy and fresh and keep windows open. Plant a sapling, water it every day and watch it grow.
5. Do not dwell on your guilt. Your guilty feelings are just a heavy baggage you will never need, never tow them along with you. Everybody commits mistakes. Always learn from your mistakes, and then and move on in life. Make sure to remember not to repeat the same mistake again. More guilt you carry along, more harm you are doing to your self-esteem.
6. Don't avoid your challenges. Face them, and you will be surprised to discover that they will not remain challenges any more! e.g., if you are avoiding parties because you think you are shy and cannot associate, then take this as a challenge and attend your next party, and see what happens! If you are avoiding interviews out of fear, then take up one interview as a challenge; prepare for it well, and go full steam for it!

## Twelve Powerful Tips to Build Confidence and Self Esteem

To increase your self confidence you can do the following exercises:

1. Do at least do 10 push ups and 2 cart-wheels everyday.
2. Learn how to express your feelings in front of others.
3. Stand in front of the mirror and give a short lecture on any topic.
4. Learn 3 magic tricks and learn how to perform it in front of others.
5. Manage your mood better: Whether you are in a car or at home, utilize your time prudently. Make best use of your collection of CDs and cassettes; utilize them smartly for your entertainment, growth and prosperity.
6. When you are facing a challenging task, ask yourself: "Am I interpreting an easy work to be a tough one?" Then tell yourself "This task is actually much easier than I thought it was."
7. Take a deep breath in and then slowly breathe out. Close your eyes and think of the future. Plan your actions accordingly.
8. Keep your body relaxed. Plan to take rest when you need it. If you feel exhausted, lie on the floor by keeping your body straight and feel the relaxation soaking into every part of your body. Do this twice a day.
9. Concentrate on a positive thought at least once a day. Think of the sun - which spreads its light everywhere, or a flower - that has bloomed with so much of hidden possibilities - and you will feel peace, bliss and completeness within yourself.
10. Learn to accept and admit your mistakes when you are wrong.
11. Give yourself permission to live a life of trial and err.
12. Learn a new recipe and try your hand at it. Reward yourself for trying something new.

I repeated many of the points that I have given earlier. But they ARE important, remember them and use them as *mantra* for a great life!

## Honor Your Strength

Are you aware of your strengths? If you really know them, honor them and nurture them. Help them bloom like a beautiful flower.

In this section, I am not talking about physical (muscular) strength – it is the inner strength that is an inseparable part of your self, of what you are. The key to self confidence is to search for your inner strength and bring it out.

Always respect and take good care of your emotional needs. Spend as much time as you can with people who make you feel good and with whom you love to stay. Try to do something good for yourself every day and write it down in your journal. This can be mundane things like walking down the street during sunset, writing a poem, chatting with your friend over internet or watching a movie.

A few very effective exercises in order to build your strength are:

1. Power of visualization- the most important tool to boost self confidence is your power of visualization. Teach yourself to visualize your success. Imagine a picture of yourself as if you have already achieved your goal. How do you feel? Remember this feeling.
2. Fill your room with things you love – It is important to keep yourself happy. If you share a home, just have a special place that is exclusively yours.
3. Occasionally, prepare a meal for yourself - prepare your own meal, set a table and have your meal. Pamper yourself and enjoy the delicacy that is purely your creation.

Inner strength is something which resides at your subconscious level. Till 1953, people used to think that it is impossible for a person to run 1 mile in just 4 minutes. But in 1954, Roger Banister of Britain shattered this record and completed 1 mile in less than 4 minutes. How could he do it? The answer is - *He could identify his inner strength and put it to use for achieving his Goal*. All great achievers surpass themselves like this with the help of their inner strength.

Experience is not just an occurrence of something but it is the knowledge that we gain out of it. Life gives us endless opportunities, but can we jump in and avail all the opportunities that cross our path? Every opportunity comes in the guise of a problem, when a natural hesitation overcomes a person, preventing him to act in time. The

opportunity passes by. If we can overcome the fear and hesitation, we can turn every opportunity to our benefit; we can be winners creating boundless wealth, prosperity, name and fame for ourselves.

***Fame= Talent + Self Marketing + Opportunity***

Make yourself ready for success and success will come knocking at your door. A successful person gets what he really wants in life. Learn to respect your self and honor your inner strength. Self respect is the most important ingredient of a successful person. Self respect is directly proportional self confidence and self esteem. Shower your love and trust on everybody, just like a small baby who trusts everyone. If anyone disrespects your trust and betrays you, forgive them – but remember them. Remember - you are a good human being and you want everyone’s happiness, no matter if anyone hurts you or not. If you are angry with anyone address it calmly and complain without emotion or exaggeration.

Now, ask yourself the following questions, and **write down** the reply you get from your heart.

1. “What is my goal in life?”
2. “By which date do I want to achieve my goal?”
3. “Which of the special qualities and positive strengths that I have, will help me achieve my goal within that time?”
4. “Do I truly believe from the core of my heart that I **can** achieve my goal?”

Congratulations! If your answer to Q4 is yes, you have just embarked on the exciting journey of achieving your goal.

Until here, you have come with me on the journey to find out the basic reasons why people fail, lose faith and suffer from low self-esteem. Through this book, I have made an endeavor to help you understand some simple rules of building self esteem and confidence, so that you can discover the fantastic world of success for yourself.

Now it is your turn to put these simple techniques, tools and exercises to practice – since *practice makes a man perfect*. As you progress, I can guarantee, you will wake up each morning feeling more confident and more effective than the day before. It is indeed a continuous process that will take you through a lot of self-discovery and realization. I am confident you will enjoy the journey. Congratulations on a sure-shot success-filled future!

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## A to Z of How to Build Confidence & Self Esteem

Remember the 90/10 principle of Stephen Covey?

10% of life is made up of what happens to you. And 90% of life is decided by how you react.

So, no more excuses. Life is beautiful. Get going!

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