

Build Confidence in Interpersonal Relationships - Top Tips

For some people, self-confidence with regard to personal relationships is challenging. You may find that you have confidence in many other areas of your life - your business, talents, and so forth - but lack the confidence to have successful personal relationships. For some, this is due to past experiences - once bitten, twice shy, so to speak. For others, it just seems to be how they're wired; they just can't be the social butterfly they wish they could be.

If any of this describes you, read on for some tips and suggestions that may help.

Recognize You're Not Alone

Pretending like you don't have trouble with confidence is not going to help. You'd be surprised at how many people who seem naturally born confident actually took time and effort to learn the art of self-confidence in their relationships. If there weren't a growing number of people in need of self-confidence, there wouldn't be a growing field of confidence coaches and life coaches to help!

Consider Coaching

You might consider becoming a client of a confidence or life coach. These coaches specialize in helping people realize their potential, both professionally and personally. There's no shame in seeking advice, whether from a friend or a professional.

Your Contribution

If you feel insecure when you think of your interpersonal relationships (or when you think of starting one), it might help to remember that you have something of value to contribute to that relationship. Lack of confidence may stem from a sense that relationships are only about you pleasing the other person, or getting him or her to like you. However, it's important to realize that you have something to contribute to the relationship which will benefit the other person - you!

Flaws Happen

Remember that both you and the person with whom you are in a relationship have flaws. Everyone does. People who lack confidence in relationships tend to walk on eggshells, afraid they will say or do something to cause the other person to turn against them. But truthfully, someone who really likes or loves you is not going to ditch you just because you said one off-color thing or made one mistake. And if they do, you didn't need them to begin with!

Silence the Negative Inner Voice

First, you have to recognize it - listen for a few days to your inner voice. What's it saying? Do you hear, "You're not good enough," "No one would ever put up with you," or "I just can't go over and talk to him/her?" Once you begin to hear these thoughts, it's time to take action and change them. Often, such negative self-talk is a habit and you don't even realize you're doing it. You have to forge new habits of positive self-talk instead. Remember that you have something to contribute to a relationship and the right person will be glad to have you as an addition to his or her life!

Mindsets that Lead to Low Self-Confidence and How to Change Them

If you suffer from low self-confidence, you might be stuck in some negative mindsets that are affecting the way you think about yourself and, ultimately, your self-esteem. Negative mindsets tend to have a lot of "always" or "never" talk, creating a sense of entrapment and hopelessness. Here are some examples of negative mindsets that can lead to low confidence.

"I will never get it right."

Thinking this way can keep you from trying again, or even trying something for the first time. It makes it only too easy to give up.

"Nobody understands what this is like."

When you lack self-confidence, a lot of times you assume that everyone else has it together and you're the odd man or woman out. You may feel isolated, and feel as if others have their lives together while you are still floundering.

"I am totally useless."

When you lack confidence, you may feel like you don't have anything of value to contribute, whether it's to your workplace, relationships, or something else.

"I am a complete failure."

No one fails at every single thing; but to a person with low self-confidence, it can sure seem that way. You may feel like everything you've ever tried has failed, even if this is not true.

"I could never do that."

Do you see someone with a successful lifestyle you wish you had? If you lack self-confidence, you may have the above reaction. Instead of being inspired and wanting to create that lifestyle for yourself, you look at that person and get depressed, thinking you could never have what they have.

How Can These Mindsets Be Overcome?

In order to overcome these destructive mindsets that lead to low confidence, it's necessary to reprogram your thought processes. You will need to pay attention to your negative self-talk and immediately change it to something positive.

For example, instead of "I will never get it right," you could stop that thought in its tracks and think instead, "I have trouble with this, but if I keep trying and seek out the right help, I know I can succeed." Rather than, "I could never do that," think, "I would love to do that! There's no reason why I can't have that lifestyle if I work at it."

You may need therapy and/or counseling to overcome these mindsets. But like everything else in life, you can do it if you set realistic goals and have confidence in yourself!

Confidence Coach: A Viable Career Choice

Do people tell you you're encouraging? Do you find that you enjoy giving people helpful advice and boosting their confidence? Then you might consider becoming a confidence coach.

This rapidly-expanding business takes several forms. Some people specialize in coaching certain types of people (such as entrepreneurs) or age groups (such as teens). Following are some examples of what a confidence coach is and what he or she does, and some tips on becoming one.

What Is a Confidence Coach?

Generally speaking, a confidence coach is someone who makes a living at encouraging others and boosting their self-confidence. Confidence coaches give their clients tips on how to think positively and discover their gifts and talents, and they help their clients identify what situations cause them to lose confidence.

A confidence coach then gives tips and training to his or her clients to help them overcome their low confidence. The coach helps clients to identify where they have confidence trouble, and to face that "glitch" and overcome it.

Another thing confidence coaches may do is help clients identify goals, both short- and long-term. Ultimately, confidence coaches want to see their clients achieve success in life.

How Do Confidence Coaches Do What They Do?

There are several approaches you can take as a confidence coach. For example:

- * CDs and DVDs are a popular way for confidence coaches to reach their clients. You might produce a series of CDs or DVDs, or offer them in correlation with printed media.
- * Online tutorials, to which clients can subscribe, are another visual medium through which confidence coaches can help their clients.
- * Ebooks and written guides help confidence coaches sell their message to clients while still having a personal connection with them.
- * Phone calls, personal emails, online chats, and live video are some personal ways that confidence coaches can connect with their clients.

How Can I Become a Confidence Coach?

There are training courses you can take, and if this is what you would like or need, you have your choice online. Most of these courses are offered by businesspeople like yourself, so generally there is a fee for the course.

Or you can also simply go for it without special training - some successful entrepreneurs say they became experts on a certain topic on the day they decided they were! In other words, there is a great deal of information out there and you can avail yourself of it and train yourself.

Look at the websites of other confidence coaches. Read the testimonials and find out what clients appreciate. Then, you will need to set up a unique and powerful website yourself.

Tips on Boosting Self-Confidence for Teens

Whether you're a male or female teen, your self-confidence is important. While the emphasis is often on girls' self-esteem, boys need to be confident, too, and often struggle just as much (although perhaps in different areas). Here are some tips to help teens build their self-confidence.

Recognize Your Talents

It's easy to blow off your abilities, especially if your peers make fun of them (and they probably do so out of jealousy). But get serious with yourself and make a list of things you love to do and are good at. Keep this list just for yourself and look at it often. Remember it when you flunk a test or say something you wish you hadn't. Those talents of yours won't go away, and you can rely on them for the rest of your life...as long as you cultivate them.

Cultivate Your Abilities

You may have so many interests and abilities that it's impossible to develop them all; or, you may have one thing you really love to do. Regardless, look into developing and using some of your abilities in applications beyond school. Not only will it open more opportunities to look for activities around your community, but it might also remove you from peer judgment.

Be Like a Duck

Have you ever heard the expression that you should be like a duck and let negative words and attitudes roll off your back? It's a good thing to cultivate - if you take every criticism or off-hand comment to heart, you might find yourself paralyzed with fear of other's judgment. Remember, school and teenage-hood are not forever. You will get out of this stage and you shouldn't let the criticisms of others sabotage your future, which lasts a lot longer than middle and high school!

Resist the Urge to Compare

When you look at your friends, classmates, or pictures of celebrities, try to resist the temptation to scrutinize them as the gold standard to which you should aspire. Someone will always have better legs, superior athletic prowess, nicer hair, etc. than you. But those people don't set the standard for you; you are who you are, and they can't measure up to that, either!

Listen to the Inner Voice - Then Tell It to Shut Up

Stop and listen to your inner thoughts for a while. What do you automatically think of yourself in response to certain situations? What do you say to yourself when you wake up, interact with friends, or go to class? If you are tearing yourself down with negative thoughts, you need to stop. Address the negative self-talk and replace it with positive self-talk instead.

How Diet, Exercise, and Confidence Are Connected

Do you struggle with not feeling confident? While therapy and coaching can help, it may also be of benefit to address your diet and exercise schedules.

The Connection

When you eat well and exercise, it may help boost your self-confidence. Why? Here are some thoughts.

* **Body image** - While exercising won't necessarily result in the perfect body, it does tend to give you a sense that you are being proactive about your health; you're doing the right thing and working toward getting fit. Recognizing this - even if you can't get rid of those love handles - can help you feel more confident in yourself.

* **Mood food** - The food you eat can affect your mood, sources say, which in turn affects your confidence. Low blood sugar can cause you to feel grouchy and easily annoyed, and a diet high in sugar may contribute to depression (the ultimate in low confidence!). Lean protein combined with complex carbohydrates is a winning combination.

* Endorphins - Exercise stimulates your body to produce endorphins, which are brain chemicals that help you feel good. These substances play a role in relieving depression and improving mood.

* Energy level - If you're struggling with self-confidence, feeling sluggish doesn't help. Exercise and a healthy diet are key elements to feeling energetic and, ultimately, confident.

* Vitamins and minerals - Your confidence is affected by how you look and feel, and getting the right vitamins and minerals is important for things like teeth, skin, and hair. When these aspects of your appearance are healthy and at their optimum, it helps you feel better about yourself.

Specifically, some vitamins and minerals are directly implicated in improving mood and, consequently, confidence. These include B-complex vitamins and Vitamin D. In fact, fat-soluble Vitamin D is sometimes used by medical professionals to treat Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). When you are getting the right amount of key vitamins and minerals, you are much more likely to feel confident in yourself.

* Productivity - When your energy and confidence levels are up due to exercise and diet, you are much more likely to be more productive in work, school, and relationships. And this becomes a positive cycle - increased productivity boosts your confidence even more.

* Positive effects - If you begin to exercise and eat healthfully, you may find yourself looking better - you may experience weight loss, better muscle tone, and healthier skin. Looking in the mirror and liking what you see can go a long way toward boosting confidence!

Can Hypnosis Help Boost Confidence and Self-Esteem?

As an alternative approach, hypnosis is gaining credibility as an effective way to manage low self-esteem and low confidence.

A Real Problem

It's tempting to disregard the whole subject and notion of self-esteem and confidence. Seeking treatment for something so "trivial" may seem silly. But in actuality, low self-esteem and lack of confidence can greatly inhibit your life. For example:

- * Lack of confidence puts self-doubt and fear in charge, and those can paralyze you in your efforts toward success.
- * People with low self-esteem may end up in destructive relationships, thinking they are not worth anyone who treats them well.
- * Without confidence, business ventures may not even be tried and financial success remains elusive.
- * Low confidence can greatly inhibit the development of your talents and abilities.
- * For some people, lack of self-confidence and self-esteem go so far as to produce feelings of depression and even suicide.

As you can see, low self-esteem and lack of confidence are not just modern psycho-babble. People who struggle with these issues often need help. So can hypnosis do the trick?

What Is Hypnosis?

Many of us have antiquated images of hypnosis that involve swinging watches and hypnotized people doing humiliating things, such as believing they're a chicken. But hypnosis - or hypnotherapy - is different.

Modern hypnotherapy is more about empowerment than deception. When you undergo hypnotherapy, you learn to enter into a state of deep relaxation (which is a helpful skill in and of itself!). The hypnosis practitioner

or therapist then taps into your inner mind and uses the power of suggestion to help rewire negative brain patterns to create healthier ones.

Hypnotherapists may use guided imagery, taking you through an imaginary scenario step by step, giving you suggestions and approaches to face the problems presented. Hypnotherapy may help in the following areas:

- * Assertiveness, a trait often lacking in those with low confidence, may be enhanced by the suggestive power of hypnosis.
- * A positive attitude to help you cope with everyday life
- * Facing and overcoming any underlying causes or emotions that may contribute to your low self-esteem
- * Developing visions and goals for your life
- * Confidence in your abilities may be enhanced by hypnotherapy
- * Learning positive self-talk

What may make hypnosis so successful is that it can reach those areas of the mind that you simply can't seem to access. It is a technique that bypasses the "walls" you may have put up to keep people from tapping into the real you, and addresses your core self.

Tips to Help Overcome Shyness and Social Awkwardness

Feeling shy or awkward in certain situations is understandable. Don't we all have a little nervousness before we go talk to that guy or girl, or get sweaty palms before giving a speech? For some, though, shyness and social awkwardness may not be circumstantial, but constant. This can be very frustrating and hard to overcome, but there are some things you can do to help overcome your shyness and approach people in social situations. Here are some tips.

Learn to Laugh

There's something about laughter that makes everyone feel more comfortable. This is why "ice breaker" activities at parties are often designed to get the participants laughing. So don't be afraid to laugh at someone's jokes, or learn a few funny lines yourself (not canned "pick-up" lines, but clever observations or comments).

Force Yourself to Stay

Sometimes, shy people feel so uncomfortable in a social situation that they just want it to end; they just want to get away. Consciously resist this impulse. Tell yourself to stand your ground, stay put, and interact. Remember, the other person is not going to breathe fire; he or she just wants to have a conversation and get to know you.

Learn to be Comfortable with Silence

Social situations can feel especially awkward if you are uncomfortable with mutual silence. This may trigger shy people to "babble" to fill the silence, which then makes them feel even more awkward because they feel like what they're saying is silly or nonsensical. So be cool - some silence between people is okay. In fact, it helps give the other person a chance to think before he or she speaks. The person you're speaking with will appreciate this!

Stretch

Just like physical stretching, socially and psychologically stretching can be somewhat uncomfortable, even painful. But also like physical stretching, it's necessary. If your first instinct is to say "No" when someone asks you to do something, stop and think first. Tell the person you will get back to him or her if you aren't sure. This will give you some time to pluck up your courage and say "Yes."

When to Seek a Professional

There is a point when simple shyness and social awkwardness may be an actual disorder. Social anxiety disorder and social phobia are real disorders that may need the help of a professional. The difference between shyness and these disorders is how much it affects your life.

For example, if you are so shy and embarrassed by just the thought of having to introduce yourself to others or attend a party that you go to great lengths to avoid the situation, it might be a social disorder. When it's social anxiety or phobia, you have trouble living a normal and productive life due to your social fears.

From Self-Consciousness to Self-Confidence - Tips for Parents of Teens

As a parent, it can be painful to watch your teen struggle with self-consciousness and low confidence. Is there anything you can do to help build your teen's self-confidence? Here are some tips.

Learning to Fail

We want our children to be safe, physically and emotionally. But sources say that this can become too much of a good thing. If you feel the need to protect your child from any difficulty - not allowing him to date, for instance, to protect him from a broken heart; or not letting her try out for a sports team because you don't think she'll be the best - then you may end up undermining your teen's self-confidence. Learning how to try and fail and try again is one of life's most important lessons.

You may think that failure will destroy your teen - after all, if you allow him or her to fail, won't that destroy his or her self-confidence? Surprisingly, failure can be an opportunity - it's a chance to self-assess and ultimately build self-confidence.

Equip Your Teen

Letting your teen flounder on his own without providing guidance can compromise his sense of confidence. He needs some practical tools so that he feels confidently equipped to tackle problems and issues in his life. Have heart-to-heart talks about dating, schoolwork, and parental expectations, and arm your teen with practical advice on what to do in these areas of life. Sometimes, teens just need help formulating a plan of action to feel confident.

Don't Always Blame Others

We all know that parent - the mom who yells at the coach when her child strikes out, or the dad who yells at the teacher when his child is reprimanded. But is that parent you? Think carefully - do you tend to take up your teen's cause no matter what and assume the world is against her? Sometimes, in your eagerness to be a friend to your teen, you may forget that sometimes your teen is in the wrong and needs your correction, or at least your admission that she is on the wrong track.

Beautiful Facts

Most teens are not aware that the images they see on television and in magazines are largely staged. Celebrities who seem perfectly beautiful aren't necessarily so - they have the advantage of being able to spend most of every day working on their appearance, and they also have the advantage of a camera lens between themselves and the rest of the world.

Introduce your teen to the deceptive nature of magazine photography and movie cameras, and point out that keeping up appearances can be so exhausting that few celebrities have normal, healthy lives and relationships.

Tips on Teaching Your Child to Be Self-Confident

Parents usually want their children to be self-confident - after all, self-confidence is a key component of success in life. But how do you teach this important life skill? Here are some tips.

Meet Needs

Experts note that babies and later children who have their needs met consistently - needs for food, comfort, a listening ear, etc. - are learning the message that they are worth paying attention to; they learn they have worth. Some professionals believe this is best accomplished through the practice of attachment parenting. Others simply note that prompt and consistent meeting of needs will send a positive message to children.

Play with Your Child

Play is how your child learns about and interacts with his or her world. When you participate, you validate this playful approach. You are sharing your child's world and helping him or her to see that Mom and/or Dad like the same things they do.

Parents can get pushy about teaching their children the value of hard work or the completion of tasks. While these things are certainly important, the time in a person's life when they are young, playful children is quite short. So embrace this time and play with your child, and work in on the task-oriented training in addition to play time. Honestly, it can be therapeutic for parents to play with their kids!

Put on a Happy Face

Okay, not everyone is happy all the time, and parents get stressed. This is understandable, and there's no need to invent a perpetually-cheerful persona; it's not realistic. But if your children receive the constant message that they are the source of your stress, they may begin to take on that identity. They will see themselves as an annoyance, and this may undermine their self-confidence.

Watch What You Say

In a similar vein to the paragraph above, be careful about complaining about your children in their hearing. Yes, parenting is hard, and children can try your patience. But if you need to vent to your friends about the things your child does that drive you crazy, do it at a time when your child is not present or after he or she has fallen asleep.

Don't Withhold Yourself

If your child fails at something - and he or she will at some point - it's important not to withdraw or withhold love and attention. This sends the message that your child's achievements are more important than the child him/herself. Instead, make sure your child knows you love him or her no matter what failures happen.

Of course, this does not mean you as a parent need to accept constant failure or not encourage your child to do better. The important thing is for your child not to think your love is conditional. Privileges can be conditional; parental love shouldn't be.

Steps to Confidence

Building confidence is a necessary exercise for many of us. If self-confidence does not come naturally, building it up takes deliberate, conscious effort. While no step-by-step program is perfect, following are some steps that may help you build up your sense of confidence.

Goals

Write them down. Make a list of your goals, long and short term, and then below each goal write the steps it will take to get there. For example, if one of your goals is to launch a website to earn money, your list might look like this:

Launch Website

- a. Reserve domain

- b. Set up hosting
- c. Contact web designer and discuss layout
- d. Write a short ebook as a promotional giveaway
- e. Write content and newsletters for site to cover several months after launch

Whether it's relationships, business ventures, or self-improvement, writing your goals and their necessary steps can make those goals much less formidable and much more doable. That alone helps you feel more confident in moving forward.

Stop Comparing

While it's good to have aspirations toward self-improvement, constantly comparing yourself to the best of the best in your realm can get discouraging. For example, if you'd like to have a talk radio show or Podcast, you might be inspired by high-profile radio hosts; being inspired by them is fine, but beating yourself up because you are not exactly like they are - complete with millions of listeners - will only discourage you.

Build a Positive Self-Image

It seems that when you are just certain you are going to fail before you try something, you are more likely to fail when you do try it. If you have a negative self-image and think you just can't achieve anything, it's likely that you won't - thus underscoring this false impression about yourself. Stop listening to the negative inner voice and instead tell yourself that you can achieve your goals and, even if you fail, it's not because you are a bad person or because you didn't try.

Get to Know Yourself

This means spending some quiet time thinking or writing in a journal - some quiet time by yourself in which you assess your strengths, weaknesses, and personality. What are your character traits? What quirks and talents do

you have? Pretend like you are being interviewed and that the interviewer is trying to get to know you. What questions would they ask?

Turn off the Media

For a while, it might be good to turn off the TV and put down the magazines. The perfect-people images found in the media can be discouraging for those who are struggling with self-confidence.