

Of Interest

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What You See Is What You Get

by Liz Ashe

The way you perceive yourself is called “self-esteem.” It basically is the degree to which you assign worth to yourself. According to Dr. Phil, the bad news is that your level of self-esteem is up to you. The good news is that your level of self-esteem is up to you.

Your thoughts about yourself may be influenced by your own personality traits, life experiences, interactions with others and the reactions of others to you, but in the final analysis, it’s up to you. You control it. It’s that little voice inside your head that says “I like myself” or “I hate myself,” “I can do anything I set my mind to” or “I can never do anything right.”

A positive self-esteem is healthy. It improves your outlook on life, and gives you the confidence you need to be successful. Negative self-esteem is not healthy. It causes stress and can be painful. Too much stress can lead to serious physical and emotional problems.

Take a Closer Look

Improving self-esteem means taking a realistic look at yourself, now, as an adult. You need to do this without judgment and without “voices from your past.” Many of us were programmed to feel bad about ourselves, less confident and less worthy. Many of us as children were subjected to harsh and unwarranted criticism. Well meaning parents and teachers wanted to make us be “better people” or wanted us to “strive to be the best we can be.” Their way of trying to make us better may have been to criticize our faults or shortcomings. They were doing the best they knew how. Sadly some children felt that they weren’t ok or weren’t good enough.

What Are You Gonna Be?

In the movie Forrest Gump, Forrest was asked, “What are you gonna be?” He replied, “Aren’t I gonna be me?” What a wonderful and simple way to think.....how better off we would all be if we could just accept ourselves for who we are. Consider this view:

*I am enough
I am good as can be
I am enough
It’s okay to just be me!*

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You Are A Key Person

“Even though my typewriter is an old model, it works very well ----except for one key. You would think that with all the other keys functioning properly, one key not working would hardly be noticed; but just one key not working seems to ruin the whole effort.

You may say to yourself – ‘Well, I’m only one person. No one will notice if I don’t do my best.’ But it does make a difference because, to be effective, an organization needs active participation by every one to the best of his or her ability. We need to work together as a team.

So the next time you think that you are not an important member of our team, remember my old typewriter.

You are a key person!!!”

Source: EAP Headlines, Concord Hospital, Concord N.H. Originally taken from the Pasadena Weekly Business Journal, CA

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According to Dr. Phil, those with a true sense of self-worth are able to just “be.” They don’t have to be the center of attention or prove anything to anyone. His father once said to him, “You wouldn’t worry so much about what others thought of you if you knew how seldom they did.” Most folks don’t put nearly as much time, effort and energy into contemplating our worth as we think they do. (Life Strategies, Phillip C. McGraw, Ph.D.).

Healing doesn’t occur in the past.

Much of the time, when we have negative thoughts about ourselves, we are responding to our own or someone else’s perception, not who we really are. As adults we do not have to continue any personal assault in the absence of those in our past.

You are now with yourself 24/7 so you alone have the most influence over your self-image than anyone in the past. Change the perception and you can change your life. It may seem like re-parenting yourself. But if you weren’t told that you were a special, talented wonderful person, you can start telling yourself now. The louder your positive self-affirmations are, the more the negative ones will fade.

“There is an applause superior to that of the multitudes - one’s own.” Elizabeth Elton Smith, English writer.

“No one can make you inferior without your consent.”
Eleanor Roosevelt, former first lady.

“Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world.”
Lucille Ball, actress.

Helpful Self-Esteem Improving Tips

- Don’t put yourself down to yourself or to others.
- Do not demand perfection. It is impossible. Allow yourself to make mistakes and learn from them.
- Think positive thoughts about yourself. Post positive affirmations where you can see them.
- Enjoy who you are. You are just as good as anyone else.
- Comparing usually doesn’t help anyone.
- Remember, there will always be someone smarter, more good looking and more popular than you are and you will be smarter, better looking and more popular than someone else.
- Believe that everyone has strengths and liabilities. Correct what you can, but focus on your strengths. But absolutely give up trying to change things you have no control over, or trying to be someone else.
- Care about yourself. How you dress, carry yourself and treat your body adds a lot to your self-esteem.
- Repeat mantras to yourself every morning... “I love myself” or “I’m lovable as can be.”
- Be aware of negative thoughts the moment they show up in your head. Don’t fall for them. Say “CANCEL...CANCEL”, then think of something else.
- Speak up in meetings. Your ideas are as important as anyone’s. Remember all the times someone said the very thing you were thinking and they got the all the credit?
- Make a list of all your good points, your talents and your successes. Review the list when you are feeling low.

**If you are still having problems,
your EAP is here for you.**

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