

# YOU CAN DO IT - UNDERSTANDING AND OVERCOMING LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Low self-esteem can often be traced back to childhood. *For those who had a difficult upbringing or suffered through a traumatic event, low self-esteem is fairly common.* However, it's possible to develop self-esteem issues in adulthood as well.

When you go through a difficult time, it can affect the way you see yourself. For example, if you are unemployed, go through a divorce, or file bankruptcy, you may internalize these negative experiences and believe that it's your fault and that you caused these bad things to happen.

# LEARN ABOUT THE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO OVERCOME LOW SELF-ESTEEM:

1. **Surround yourself with positive people and remove the negative ones from your life.**  
*Spending time with those who are negative will only reinforce your low opinion of yourself.* It's better to surround yourself with individuals who are supportive and encouraging.
  - If you're fortunate enough to have positive influences in your life, listen to them when they say you've done a good job.
  - Avoid ignoring compliments because you feel unworthy. If you were undeserving of the praise, you wouldn't be getting it.
2. **Avoid telling yourself you "should have," "could have," or "would have."** If you're constantly telling yourself "I could have done this," or "I should have done that," you're focusing on things that have already happened and that you're unable to change.

- It's better to look to the future and say, "Next time I'll do this," or "I'm going to do that."
3. **Set reasonable expectations.** Accept that human beings make mistakes. If you're unwilling to accept anything less than perfection from yourself, you'll feel completely discouraged when you inevitably make a mistake.
- Avoid letting mistakes get you down.  
***Remember that every mistake you make is a chance to learn and grow.***
4. **Recognize and celebrate your accomplishments.** If your self-esteem is lacking, you might spend a lot of time focusing on the negative. Acknowledge your accomplishments and allow yourself to be happy. It's okay to be proud of yourself.
5. **Volunteer for a charitable organization.** Working to help others will make you feel good about yourself and help boost your self-esteem.
- It's difficult to have a poor opinion of yourself when you're supporting a good cause.

6. **Make a list of all your best qualities. *Get a pen and paper and write down your strengths, skills, talents, and positive personality traits.***
  - When people have low self-esteem, they often focus on all of the things they dislike about themselves. Taking some time to focus on your good qualities can have a very positive effect.
  
7. **Consider seeking professional help.** In more extreme cases, low self-esteem can have a negative impact on a person's life and mental health.
  - A person with very low self-esteem may have issues in their relationships, trouble in their careers, or a number of other challenges. ***Sometimes esteem issues can lead to anxiety, social withdrawal, depression, or even suicide.***
  - If low self-esteem is causing chaos in your work and personal life, you may want to consider seeing a therapist for additional help. They can provide you with additional strategies for increasing your self-esteem. A therapist may even be able to help you deal with the

underlying issues that caused your low self-esteem in the first place.

There are many factors which can cause or contribute to low self-esteem. The key is to figure out how to overcome your low self-esteem and start feeling good about yourself again.