



In releasing yourself from the bondage of bad habits, don't try to do them all at once... Build on the strength of each victory. As the saying goes, "It's a cinch by the inch, but it's hard by the yard."

John Roger and Peter McWilliams

For more information and/or a list of leaflets and other materials produced by the Student Counselling Service:

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self-esteem

student counselling



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What is Self-Esteem?



Self-esteem is the experience of being capable of meeting life's challenges and being worthy of happiness. Ultimately, the health of our own self-esteem is our own responsibility.

What Affects Self-Esteem?

- Not having your basic needs adequately met if incapacitated or disabled
- Having your feelings persistently ignored or denied
- Being put-down, ridiculed or humiliated
- Being required to assume a “false-self” in order to impress others or get their needs met
- Being given the impression that your views or opinions are insignificant
- Being taken for granted, ignored or rejected – especially by someone whom you like, love or respect
- Making a mistake – especially one which we feel we should not have made
- Doing something “wrong” – especially if the deed breaches our own moral code

Ten keys to improving Self-Esteem

Scrutiny – exploring how you feel

Explanation – understanding why

Love – you are important

Focus – what could be changed

Envisaging – imagining the differences

Strategy – how to implement changes

Triggers – what affects how you feel

Encouragement – go for it

Experimentation – trying different ways

Monitoring – noticing what happens



Strategies for Building Self-Esteem

- Free yourself from “shoulds”. Live your life on the basis of what feels right and possible for you. Rely on your own opinion of yourself.
- Respect and take care of your own needs.
- Set realistically achievable goals. Work step-by-step to develop your potential.
- Talk to yourself positively. Stop listening to your inner critic. Replace doubtful thoughts with self-accepting thoughts.
- Test your reality. You may feel anxious about a project, but if you think about it, you may have the ability and opportunity to accomplish something in it.
- Experience success. Feel good about it. Reward yourself for achievements.
- Take chances. Don't be disappointed by making mistakes. Feel good about trying something new.
- Solve problems. Face them and identify ways to solve or cope with them.
- Practice making and implementing positive decisions. Trust yourself.
- Emphasise your strengths. Focus on what you can do. Stop putting yourself down.
- Develop your skills. Know what you can and can't do.