

Enhancing Your Self-esteem

Do you sometimes feel 'less than' others?

What is Self-Esteem?

High self-esteem is being **able to appreciate yourself** and your inherent worth. More specifically, it means you have a positive attitude, evaluate yourself highly and are confident of your own abilities. You **feel in control of your life** and able to do what you want.

By contrast, diminished self-esteem is characterized by feelings of low personal worth and a low level of satisfaction with your life. This is often experienced as self-deprecation, helplessness, powerlessness, and depression.

Why is it important?

To adequately cope with the challenges of growing and developing, you need to believe you have the capacity to achieve what you need and want, and that you **deserve happiness and joy** in life. High self-esteem is a safety net in the **inevitable difficulties** that come with living, such as rejection, disappointments, and failure. High self-esteem can help a you weather the storms of life and look beyond to better times.

How to increase self-esteem:

- Acknowledge that it is a **personal choice** to esteem yourself, irrespective of background and prior experience. High self-esteem can not be given; it must be earned by the individual for him or herself.
- **Appraise yourself:** Make an honest list of those aspects of yourself that dissatisfy you.
- **Try changing** in small ways: Start with one area that doesn't involve a large ego investment.
- **Emphasize the positive:** List the things you like about yourself.
- **Take what people say at face value:** Don't do mind-reading and stop personalizing everything.
- **Accept yourself** without judgments: Choose to love yourself. Come to peace with your flaws; perhaps you will learn to like them.
- **Choose a difficult task** and do it: Knowledge and skill don't come magically, but proficiency is possible if you are willing to invest your time, energy, and intelligence.
- **Take charge** of your life: Be accountable for yourself and act responsibly toward others. Your esteem will grow along with your capabilities and self-confidence.

Other Sources

<http://self-esteem-nase.org>

The Antecedents of Self-esteem, Stanley Coopersmith, 155.418 C778 in BCCC Library
I'm Gonna Like Me: Letting Off a Little Self-esteem, Jamie Lee Curtis, JF C9791 in Library

To talk with a Bucks Student Planning Counselor, call 215.968.8189 or email counseling@bucks.edu to schedule an appointment. It's free and confidential.