

**Student
Wellbeing
Centre**

Self-esteem

Virtual self-help guide



**UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN**

Self-esteem is the way we perceive and value ourselves. It is common for people to compare themselves to others and this can often lead to us judging ourselves quite harshly, or putting ourselves down.

It is easier than you think to fall into a pattern of thinking negatively about ourselves. Low self-esteem can cause us to only focus on how we want to be different or what we want to change, ignoring what we actually like about ourselves.

Low self-esteem can stop us from achieving what we want to achieve and prevent us from trying anything new. Over time, if left to get worse, low self-esteem can have a significant effect on our mental health and general wellbeing.

Over the next few pages will be some useful tips, suggestions and resources on improving your self-esteem.

Ways to improve your self-esteem

Set realistic goals

Sometimes low self-esteem can be caused or made worse by setting large and complicated goals that we are then unable to reach. Make time to break your goals down into much smaller, realistic steps that you are able to achieve. This will help with your motivation and confidence.

Accept compliments

Are you the type of person who does not necessarily believe or take note when someone gives you a compliment? Most of the time, people will compliment you sincerely. Try working on accepting compliments when given – it will help provide an uplifting boost to your self-esteem.

Look after yourself

Eating properly, getting a good night's sleep, exercising regularly, getting out of the house – these are all important things to do daily to help keep yourself well. If you are feeling well, you can start to make positive changes to improve your self-esteem and confidence. Looking after yourself will impact your motivation, energy levels, memory, concentration and general overall mood.

Be your own cheerleader

This means turning any negative or derogatory thoughts you may have about yourself into positive ones. It takes practice and can be hard work, but is important for your self-esteem. Thinking negatively about ourselves is an easy pattern to fall into, so the first step is working on noticing when we are doing it. Only then can we do something about it.

Acknowledge your strengths and notice the positives

Try and think about the things you are good at, or are doing well at. If you find yourself slipping into a more negative way of thinking, just notice this and try to challenge it with something positive.

Carry a notepad with you and every time you notice something that has gone well, or if someone has said something nice about you, write it down so you can remind yourself of these later on.

Create a self-esteem journal

Like the one on the next page, a self-esteem journal is something that encourages you to think about your strengths and good qualities, or the things that you have enjoyed throughout the day. Spending 10 minutes each evening filling a journal out will help you get into the pattern of thinking more positively about yourself. If challenging your thoughts is something you have difficulty with, a self-esteem journal could help.

Self-esteem Journal

Below is an example of a self-esteem journal. Fill the tables out at the end of each day. There are only three days below, however this is something to aim to do daily.

Monday

Something I did well today

Something I did for someone

I felt good about myself when...

A positive experience I had

Tuesday

Something I did well today

Something I did for someone

I felt good about myself when...

A positive experience I had

Wednesday

Something I did well today

Something I did for someone

I felt good about myself when...

A positive experience I had

Adapted from TherapistAid.com

Useful Resources



Watch this Ted Talks by Niko Everett called 'Meet yourself: a user's guide to building self-esteem'. She opens up about what self-esteem is, her own personal journey and talks about the small things we can do to try and increase our own self-esteem.



Watch this NHS Moodzone podcast with Dr Chris Williams who helps you to replace negative thoughts with more positive thinking.



Click [HERE](#) to read Beth's blog 'When low self-esteem sneaks up on you', available on the MIND website.



Click [HERE](#) to read '5 steps you can take to rebuild self-esteem', available on the Blurt website.



Useful Apps



Inspirational Happiness Tips (free) – This app gives you many motivational and inspirational sayings and tips for you to look at when you need a 'pick me up'. Available on iOS.

Quote of the day (free) – iconic words of wisdom from some of the finest minds in history, such as Confucius, Gandhi, Churchill, Martin Luther King and the Dalai Lama. It will bring you one specially selected inspirational quote every single day! Customise, save and share the quotes you like. Available on iOS and Android.



Think Up: Positive Affirmations (free) - Positive affirmations and self-talk are a simple and proven technique to make our mind work for us. With this App, you can create personalised affirmations or pick from a variety of existing ones. You can add music, set alarms or notifications and even record affirmations in your own voice. Available on iOS and Android.

TED Conferences (free) - Explore more than 3,000 free videos and learn from the world's most remarkable people. Search by any mood or topic, from tech and science to the surprises of your own psychology. Available on iOS and Android.





Drop-in:

Monday-Friday between 12-2pm
Thursday (term-time) between 5-7pm

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