



# Give your self-esteem a boost

Being happy with yourself is a great feeling. Having good self-esteem is important to our lives. Most of us can't say we're happy with ourselves all the time. But we can say we are happy with ourselves at least some of the time.

If your sense of self-esteem is low, you can improve it! When you have doubts about your abilities or feelings, you need to focus on your strengths. This article takes a look at self-esteem. Knowing what it is and how it affects you can help you improve it.

## What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is the way we think about ourselves. It is the result of a lot of things. Building self-esteem starts in childhood. It continues throughout our lives. Our self-esteem is shaped by approval and criticism. The good news is that no matter what a person's childhood was like, everyone can build their self-esteem.

People with high self-esteem have a strong sense of self-worth. They're independent and confident. They can take care of themselves. They're not afraid to say or do what's right for them. Such people tend to see the good in themselves and their lives. Those with low self-esteem tend to focus on the bad.

## How you can build self-esteem

There are many ways to feel better about yourself. Here are some tips:

### Keep things in perspective

Work and social events can impact how you feel about yourself. Not getting that promotion or going through a divorce can affect your self-esteem. Sometimes you feel good about yourself in some areas of your life but not others. For instance, you may be confident at your job, but feel unsure about your parenting skills.

It's easy to focus so much on your own problems that you lose track of the big picture. Remember that everyone is subject to life's curves. It's normal to experience changes in your self-esteem.

### Identify positive characteristics about yourself

List the positive aspects of your life. Write down your strengths. Think about the parts of your personality you like best. Focus on these to help build your self-esteem. For example, if you're good at painting, spend more time doing it. Strengthening one area can help boost your self-esteem in others. That can help you feel better about yourself.

### See things for what they really are

People with low self-esteem often focus on feelings rather than facts. Some examples are:

- *All-or-nothing thinking.* Seeing things in black and white. You think you are a failure when you are not perfect.
- *Over-generalizing.* Seeing one negative event as pattern.
- *Mental filtering.* Picking out one negative detail and dwelling on it.
- *Rejecting the positive.* Thinking that good experiences don't count.
- *Jumping to conclusions.* Thinking negative thoughts when there are no facts to back them up them.
- *Magnifying or minimizing things.* Making a big deal out of a mistake. Or doing the same about another's success.
- *Emotional reasoning.* Believing your negative feelings are the way things really are.
- *Personalizing things.* Thinking you are the cause of a negative event when you are not.

Avoiding this type of thinking can help you build your self-esteem.

### Take care of yourself

The way we treat our bodies and minds helps our self-esteem. When we take care of ourselves, we feel better overall. Eating right and not abusing alcohol and drugs can help. So can avoiding bad relationships. We need to take charge of our feelings and actions.

A great way to help build self-esteem is to keep a log. Keep track of when you meet both short-term and long-term goals. A short-term goal might be cleaning the house. A long-term goal could be buying a car or getting a new job. This gives you a tool to turn to when you need a boost.

### For more information

More information, self-help tools and resources are available online. Go to [www.MagellanHealth.com/Training](http://www.MagellanHealth.com/Training).