



Build Positive Self-Esteem

CHALLENGE

Do something to build your self-esteem each day.

Requirements to complete this WELLNESS CHALLENGE

1. Each day, do at least one thing that makes you feel good about yourself, and write it down on your monthly **Wellness Challenge Calendar**. There can be no repeats.
2. Read “What is self esteem?” and “How to develop positive self-esteem.”
3. To complete the Challenge, you must do something that makes you feel good about yourself on at least 22 days this month.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.

What is healthy self-esteem?

When you have healthy self-esteem, you appreciate the person you are. You know you are valuable. And because you know you have value, you have confidence to try new things, to accept responsibility for your life, and to reach out to others. You know you are worthy of love.

You can have fun. But you also know when – and how – to work. You can acknowledge problems, and solve them. But when you do mess up, you admit it, learn from it, and forge ahead. When bad things happen, you are able to put them into perspective and find a way to deal with them. You are resilient.

Healthy self-esteem also means you are concerned for others. You know you have something to offer – if not to the world, then at least to your neighborhood, church, and family.

People with an exaggerated self-esteem, on the other hand, are blind to their own shortcomings. In their eyes, they are smarter, more talented, and maybe more beautiful than others. They can be conceited, overbearing, less inhibited, or more willing to take risks. Some studies have found a link between exaggerated self-esteem and aggression.

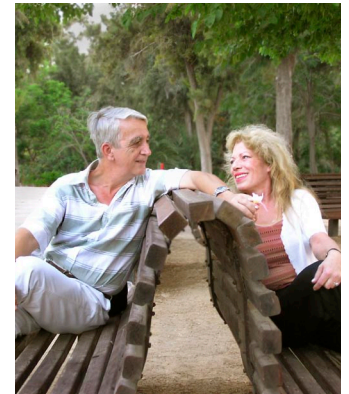
On the flip side, people with low self-esteem feel unworthy and helpless. They worry about what other people think of them. They tell themselves that they’re no good, stupid, ugly, or unlovable. They’re often fearful, reactive, defensive, angry, or depressed. People with low self-esteem are not only negative about themselves; they tend to be negative about everything.

If you have low self-esteem, or an exaggerated one, you are very likely not living to your full potential. You might even be self-destructive.

How to develop healthy self-esteem

Healthy self-esteem doesn’t come prepackaged in a box. But it is possible to develop one.

- **Don’t compare yourself with other people.** You’ll always find someone who’s better and someone who’s worse – but you’ll never find anyone just like you!
- **Look honestly at yourself.** Most people have a tendency to ignore or downplay their strengths and positive character traits.
- **Identify your character strengths,** such as honesty, loyalty, or courage.
- **Identify the things you have succeeded at,** such as learning to wrap a present or graduating from high school.
- **Recall your triumphs** so far in life, like earning a college degree or learning to water ski. Take a few minutes to remember the struggle, and how good you felt when you accomplished it.
- **Identify things you are good at,** such as telling jokes, catching a softball, or typing fast.
- **Talk to yourself positively.** Making a mistake doesn’t make you a failure. Everyone makes mistakes. Not looking your best doesn’t make you ugly. Everyone has those days, too. When you fail – and everyone does sometimes – it’s important to forgive yourself. When you succeed, praise yourself.



Affirmations are positive self-statements. They describe how you would like to feel about yourself all the time, even though they may not describe how you feel about yourself right now. Here are some positive affirmations:

- I take good care of myself. I eat right, get plenty of exercise, do things I enjoy, get good healthcare, and attend to my personal hygiene needs.
- I spend my time with people who are nice to me and make me feel good about myself.
- I am a great person.
- I deserve to be happy.
- Many people like me.



- Recognize that while **there are some things you can't change** – such as how tall you are – there are many things you can change. Accept what you cannot change, and make a plan to improve what you can.
- **Get help.** Talk with friends or family who might be able to help you develop a healthy self-concept. You might also benefit from professional counseling.

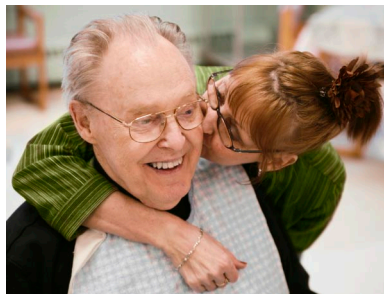
Whenever you have a negative thought, **review the lists** you just came up with!

Small steps toward positive self-esteem

Little things can add up to the total of what you believe about yourself. So, take that first little step: Sitting around thinking negative thoughts can only make you feel worse. You are unique and valuable. Treat yourself as someone who deserves good things. Try the following self-esteem boosters, and add some of your own:

- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat foods.

- Take a walk every day. Physical activity helps you feel better. And, the longer you stick with it, the better you'll feel.
- Floss your teeth.
- Do something you've been putting off, such as washing your car or emailing a friend.
- Spend time with people who treat you well. Avoid people who treat you badly.
- Do something you enjoy: Fly a kite, do a puzzle, or dance to your favorite music.
- Paint your bedroom a color that makes you happy. If you're renting and can't paint the walls, then buy a pillow in that color.
- Let a stranger go in front of you at the checkout.
- Learn something new.
- Tell someone how much you appreciate them. Make it specific.
- Have a physical exam every year to make sure you are in good health.
- Organize your sock drawer or cupboards.
- Get at least 7 hours of sleep daily.
- Frame pictures that remind you of special times in your life.
- When someone gives you a compliment, say "thank you" and repeat the positive message in your mind, just as it was spoken.
- Meditate or pray.
- Volunteer at your child's school or at a local nursing home.



The library is a great place to learn about history, astronomy, heroes, and geology.

- Mow the grass or weed a flowerbed.
- Drink at least 6 glasses of water daily.
- Polish a skill. If you swim "okay," take lessons to improve.
- Remind yourself every day of the positive things about your life.

When you feel more confident, try these self-esteem exercises:

- **Learn a new skill.** The options are endless: painting, golf, woodworking, sewing, gardening, cooking, collecting something, or playing an instrument. Then, give yourself time to get good at it.
- **Plan a potluck picnic.** Choose a date and time. Invite a few people who have helped you feel good about yourself – relatives, neighbors or friends, even coworkers.
- **Balance food intake** with calories burned so you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- **Identify your top 3 needs.** For example, you might need to figure out your purpose in life, to lower your cholesterol, or to be more organized. Then take steps to meet those needs. You deserve to be healthy – in mind, body, and spirit.

Remember: you didn't learn to tie your shoes in a day, and look how well you do it now!

Keep it real.

As much as you might want it, you'll probably never be a Michael Jordan or an Albert Einstein. The truth is that people vary enormously in their personalities and abilities. Just as it's important to have goals and take rational risks to accomplish them, it's also important to make sure those goals are realistic. If you are tone deaf, you probably won't succeed as an opera singer. But, if you enjoy singing karaoke – go right ahead!

The point is to enjoy today as you work toward a positive, fulfilling future.

Source: National Mental Health Information Center. Center for Mental Health Services. *Building Self-esteem: A Self-Help Guide*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. 2007.





Build Positive Self-Esteem

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Make a notation each day you do something to build positive self-esteem.
3. At the end of the month, total the number of days you were able to meet the goal. You must meet this goal at least 22 days during the month to complete the Challenge. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health!
4. Turn in your Wellness Challenge if requested, or enter your completion of this Wellness Challenge on the Health Activity Tracker report for the month, if applicable. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

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MONTH: _____							WC = Wellness Challenge	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____	WC [] ex. min. _____		
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_____ Number of days this month I did something that made me feel good about myself
 _____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking or biking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____

