

## WHAT IS SELF ESTEEM AND HOW CAN I GET ME SOME

Self-esteem also referred to as self regard, self love or ego is the opinion and feelings of like or dislike one has of him/herself. These self-opinions begin developing early in childhood and continue throughout life. The complex mixture of how people treat us, how we perceive things, the circumstances we live in and our mental and physical health shapes self-esteem.

Many mistakenly talk about self-esteem as though it is one static entity. In reality self-esteem has many components and fluctuates over time across different situations. For example, you may be proud of yourself in some ways and ashamed in others. Often peoples views of themselves are inaccurate and lead to poor esteem unnecessarily.

Self-esteem can be nurtured and cultivated but it takes energy, commitment, honesty and perseverance. Inspirational quotes found in pop psychology books and women's magazines can be uplifting in the short run. More genuine, longer lasting positive self-feelings require work

## HOW YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR SELF ESTEEM

--Identify the things you like about yourself and list your strengths. Most people have many internal resources and untapped potential. Just because you are not aware of them does not mean they do not exist. If you have trouble with this task you may want to get some input from people you trust

--Make a list of the things you have accomplished throughout your life. More than likely if you think hard about it you will find positive things that you have done but forgotten

--Make a list of things you have wanted to do in the past but for whatever reason did not. Establish some realistic goals: go back to school, paint, take up a musical instrument, start a business, do volunteer work. Once you figure out what you want to do see it through even if it is scary. Facing challenges and pursuing desired goals elevates self esteem

--Idealized values such as loyalty, honesty, generosity, openness, good humor, empathy and fairness set the bar for self esteem. If you deviate from your values you place your self-esteem in jeopardy.

Self-esteem is a work in progress and needs constant maintenance. By being true to yourself, pursuing goals and adhering to your cherished values you will gain confidence and feel good about yourself