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The Gift of Self-esteem

Sue Atkins

The most important gift you can give your child is the gift of self-esteem. Self-esteem is how you rate yourself deep down. It is a belief and a confidence in your own ability and value. It's a gentle knowing that you:

- Like yourself
- Think you're a good human being
- Deserve love
- Deserve happiness
- Feel deep down in your inner knowing that you are an okay person

However, where does this ability come from?

I believe it initially comes from you - your child's parent as you are the first role model for your child and you play a major part in developing, nurturing and building your child's confidence, their self esteem and in the long term their self belief.

I see your job as a parent similar to being a gardener - where you sow seeds of confidence through nurturing, watering and feeding your growing child's self esteem, through the words that you use, through the actions that you take and the love and encouragement you give.

We are all born with our own personality traits, but it is not so much whom we are when we are born that counts, but whom we are encouraged and allowed to become.

Did you know on average, we have 90,000 thoughts a day and 60,000 of those are repetitive?

So teach your children to think positively about themselves!

What can you do as the parent of a young child to begin this very important process?

The place to start is to develop a strong healthy self-image in your child because from that solid foundation, every thing else in life will become easier and more straightforward. Your current self-image is the result of the repeated messages and instructions you received as a child from your authority figures, for example, your parents, family, teachers and other influential adults and peers in your life.

Definition

Self-esteem

–noun

1. a realistic respect for or favourable impression of oneself; self-respect
2. an inordinately or exaggeratedly favourable impression of oneself

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

Confidence

–noun

1. full trust; belief in the powers, trustworthiness, or reliability of a person or thing
2. belief in oneself and one's powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance

<http://dictionary.reference.com>

What you do, say and how you act really matter

A useful attitude to adopt as a parent is one of "awareness parenting" - by this I mean being constantly aware of the bigger picture. It is the destination of your parenting- the nurturing of the unique, happy, confident and well-balanced adult that really matters.

Keeping the bigger picture doesn't always come naturally to many people and by thinking about what you're doing doesn't take away all the fun and spontaneity from your parenting- it just changes your perspective. If you are a thoughtful parent, you are nurturing self-esteem all the time and influencing how your child views them self for the rest of their lives.

I think a great question to ask yourself quickly in any situation is:

Is this bringing me closer to or further away from the relationship I want with my child?

Help your child feel special and appreciated

One of the main factors that contributes to your child becoming resilient and confident is by you focusing your energy on your child's strengths and not constantly picking up on their weaknesses.

Young children are learning and developing their skills all the time - they need your patience and understanding when they make mistakes and get things wrong and you are teaching them that it is okay to make mistakes along the way to learning a new skill.

One way for you to do this is to set aside "special times" during the week alone with each one of your children as this develops a real bond between you. It is a great idea for you to say to your young child, "When I read to you or play with you, I won't even answer the phone if it rings" so they get to know this is their special time with you and it won't be hijacked by anyone or anything else.

Also, during these special times, focus on things that your child enjoys doing so that they have an opportunity to relax and to display their strengths naturally and easily with you and when you praise them do it specifically.

Many parents just say "that's lovely" when looking at a drawing or a painting or piece of school work but building true self esteem comes from being very specific in your praise and saying something like "I really love the yellow you chose for the sand in your painting - it really reminds me of the beach on holiday and look you even remembered to put in the red boat we saw." Children then feel you are really interested in what they are doing and they feel really valued for their efforts.

Help your child to develop their problem-solving and decision-making skills

High self-esteem is associated with solid problem-solving skills so encourage your child to "struggle" with their laces for a little bit longer or with doing up their coat buttons or trying to manipulate something. It builds up persistence and tenacity and they learn to develop a wonderful sense of achievement when they have achieved it for themselves. Be guided by your child's age and personality but by developing their independence you give them a great gift.

Avoid comments that are judgmental and instead, frame them in more positive terms.

One simple exercise I do with the parents I coach is to get them to stand on a piece of paper marked "My child's point of view" as this helps them view the world from the perspective of their child's shoes and socks and it can be really illuminating!

Get a piece of paper and write on it and try the exercise.

Imagine the world from your child's point of view - what do they see, what do they hear, and how do they feel? Really relax and imagine it - if you don't like what you discover don't beat yourself up, just make a few small changes this week that will make a big difference in the confidence of your little one.

Be an empathetic parent

Many well-meaning parents, out of their own frustration, have been heard to say such things as, "What's the matter with you, why don't you listen to me?" If your child is having difficulty

Inspirational Quotation

"To establish true self-esteem we must concentrate on our successes and forget about the failures and the negatives in our lives"

Denis Waitley

"If you have confidence you have patience. Confidence, that is everything"

Ilie Nastase

with something think of some new ways to encourage them - what could you do differently that you're currently doing to support them and to let them know you are alongside them and to acknowledge that you understand their emotion, frustration or fear?

Provide choices for your child

Providing small choices between two things really helps your child develop a sense of control over their lives and builds their self-confidence. This will also lessen power struggles and tantrums!

For example, ask your child if they would like to wear their green jumper or their blue jumper for today - you still maintain control by making sure they are wearing a jumper as it is cold outside, but they feel they have made the choice and feel grown up and this helps to set the foundation of feeling in control of their lives.

Highlight your child's strengths

Always be on the look out for ways to praise what your child is good at - helping others, painting pictures, doing jigsaws, kicking balls, or being cheerful. Make a list of what your child is good at and find ways of praising them. For example, if your child is a wonderful artist, display their artwork in the kitchen and change the pictures regularly.

Have expanding expectations and goals for your child

The development of self-control goes hand-in-glove with self-esteem, and realistic expectations provide your child with a sense of control and can take away undue pressure when they are small. However, don't limit or put a ceiling on what you think your child can achieve as that creates a limiting belief within them as they feel that they can't ever achieve something above your expectations of them. Just be mindful of their age, skills and dexterity and let them explore their own potential.

Treat your child with respect

Your relationship with your child is the foundation of their relationship with others. If you treat your child with compassion, kindness and respect, they will grow up to be concerned about others, caring, considerate and respectful towards others too.

Respect is the key energy of a good family, as it brings everyone together. It creates a strong family unit that can handle whatever challenges are thrown at it like divorce, bereavement, redundancy or any of life's ups and downs. When a parent shows respect and unconditional love it creates trust and the whole family learns this culture as well.

So if you are being a respectful role model your child will respect you and learn to respect others and most importantly will learn to love and respect themselves - the key cornerstone in self-esteem, self-belief and self-confidence.

Sue Atkins is a former Deputy Head with 22 years teaching experience and is an NLP Master Practitioner and Trainer. She has written many books on self-esteem, toddlers and teenagers and has a collection of Parenting Made Easy Toolkits available from her website. She is also the author of "Raising Happy Children for Dummies" one in the black and yellow series published worldwide and available from all good bookshops.

Sue Atkins

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Accredited Training Courses and Workshops

Full Coach Training Courses

- Diploma in Life & Business Coaching
Mindstream
info@mindstream.ie



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We would appreciate your feedback on any aspect on the newsletter.

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anna@the-eci.org

Please don't forget to promote the ECI to like-minded friends and clients by forwarding them a copy.

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- Diploma in Personal and Executive Coaching
Executive Coaching Solutions Limited
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Achievement Specialists
enquiries@achievementspecialists.co.uk
- Life & Executive Practitioner Coach Diploma (DipNMC)
Noble Manhattan Coaching
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- Life & Executive Practitioner Senior Diploma (SNMC)
Noble Manhattan Coaching
info@noble-manhattan.com
- Life & Executive Master Coach (MNMN)
Noble Manhattan Coaching
info@noble-manhattan.com
- Professional Certified Power Coach® Program
Coaching and Leadership Intl. Inc.
Betska@CoachingAndLeadership.com



Further details on all these courses and workshops can be found at
http://www.europecoachinginstitute.org/coach_training/programme.php?Level=CTECI

Short Course Training Courses

- Coaching Skills for Managers
Reed Learning plc
Eleanor.Maimane@reed.co.uk
- Putting Ageing into Perspective
Mowat Research Ltd
accreditation applied for
- Quantum Goal Achievement
Noble Manhattan Coaching
info@noble-manhattan.com



Further details on all these courses and workshops can be found at
http://www.europecoachinginstitute.org/coach_training/programme.php?Level=SCECI

Workshops

- Results Coaching
Noble Manhattan Coaching
info@noble-manhattan.com



Further details on all these courses and workshops can be found at
http://www.europecoachinginstitute.org/coach_training/programme.php?Level=WSECI

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TAXCafe® - [Click here for more details](#)

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C.P.D. (continuous professional development) Log – [Click here for access to the log](#)

What other member's offers would you like the ECI to source? Let us know by sending the ECI an [email!](#)

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Acronym

- C – Celebrate
- O – Opportunity
- N – Network
- F – Feelgood
- I – Interact
- D – Dedicate
- E – Expect
- N – Nurture
- C – Content
- E – Exuberant

Top Tips

1. Celebrate your journey, not your destination - learn to always feel good about today
2. Put aside time each day to be grateful creating optimistic thoughts & behaviour
3. Focus on your contribution to the world as this stops you thinking about your flaws
4. Don't be afraid of failures. Take them in your stride, learn from them & move on
5. Have a wide range of interests. Meet and talk to a number of people
6. Develop the ability to accept constructive criticism without getting upset
7. Never compare yourself with others. This is the easiest way to feel inferior
8. Exercise to improve your well being, energise yourself, create discipline & positive momentum
9. Surround yourself with supportive people, who like & respect you. Give them the same support & respect
10. Pay attention to how you look. Take pleasure in wearing good clothes and being well groomed. It makes you feel good.

Anna Cairo

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Members Offers

[Build a Booming Business](#)

Betska K-Burr, MECI

[Get Known Fast](#)

Tessa Stowe, Assoc

Your 'Get Known Fast' programme was super value for money and I want to thank you so much for changing my life in many ways Tessa! – [click here](#) for the testimonial written by a member of the ECI

[The Science of Getting Rich](#)

Barbara J. Dalpra, FECI

How would you benefit if you were to promote your own business offers to the ECI's membership?

[Click here](#) for more information.

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ECI Sponsored Workshops

The ECI offers their Members with the opportunity to promote their own workshops and short courses. It is important to note that these short courses and workshops are *not verified* by the ECI, and therefore they are not subject to the same scrutiny as the ECI Accredited Courses and Workshops.

[Click here](#) for more information.

Abundance Retreat

"Being beyond Technique"

Resolution for Life

- Margit Jones-Hochstrasser, Assoc

**"Give Yourself the Gift of Health"
Short Course**

Rainbow Promise Health

- Dawn Campbell, CECI

**"Putting Ageing into Perspective"
Workshop**

Mowat Research Ltd.

- Dr Harriet Mowat, Assoc

**"The Positive Parenting Made Easy"
Workshop**

Positive Parents – Confident Kids Coaching Ltd. – Sue Atkins, Assoc

"Transition Retreat"

Resolution for Life

- Margit Jones-Hochstrasser, Assoc

Take this opportunity to promote your short courses and workshops.

[Email](#) the details of your workshops or short courses.

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Thought of the month

"If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would truly astound ourselves"

Thomas Edison

The issue of self-esteem is perhaps one of the greatest determinates in creating a life of freedom and abundance, or feeling inhibited and "just getting by". Self-esteem is defined as "a feeling of pride in oneself". It is how you feel in relation to yourself rather than how others see you. It is between you and, well... you. Therefore, it is not necessary to be so concerned about what others think to determine your level of self-esteem, as the definition does not include any "others", just you. So where can you help yourself to better understand you?

There are so many aspects of you but one that is of great importance is that of your mind. In the ancient wisdom of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, there are five hindrances or afflictions of the mind that are collectively known as the klesas. An understanding of each of these hindrances can help play a part in the discovery of self, leading to a feeling of well-being, connectivity, and greater self-esteem.

The hindrances are as follows: ignorance (avidya), egoism (asmita), attachment (raga), aversion (dvesa), and clinging to life (abhinivesah). Encountering the afflictions without being aware of them creates stumbling blocks on the path to self-realisation. The afflictions will arise at different times in life, but if one has spent time studying them, one may be able to recognise them for what they are and move through them with a certain level of personal understanding.

The first hindrance is ignorance of the true self which is the building block for all of the other afflictions. It can be described as an incorrect understanding of oneself that is the culmination of years of unconscious actions, thoughts, and words that one has become dependent upon as part of one's being. Sound familiar?

How many times have we replayed old tapes over and over in our head until they become so embedded in our persona that we begin to self-realize these false beliefs? From ignorance, derives judgments of oneself and of others. By understanding the various afflictions and where they originate, one may transcend a lifetime absorbed in ignorance.

The second hindrance is egoism which is the identification of the self with what one is not - the body, mind, personality, emotions, senses, accomplishments, failures, and possessions, or lack thereof. You may be thinking, "people with low self-esteem are certainly not showing an ego problem." Well, it actually is an ego problem, as the concern over what others think dominates many choices and actions in daily life. In egoism, the practice of remaining in the moment and being a non-judgmental witness comes in handy. In truly observing what is happening in life as it is, rather than placing violent judgments on self, others and situations, one may experience life with a limited ignorance. Imagine viewing the world through a camera lens and just seeing what is-nothing else.

The third hindrance is attachment which arises from the ego's idea that more is better and of the fear of losing what one already has in his/her possession. Are you keeping up with the Jones'? Do you really need to be? More stuff just means more upkeep; right? As one progresses on the life path, experiences occur that cause feelings of great pleasure. One may cling to these things in hopes of experiencing the feelings over and over again. Attachment is looking outside of oneself for validation and bliss. The reality is that external factors come and go; it is the internal true self that remains a constant. "Happiness is found within", is a timeless phrase and it is unconditional and independent of any outside circumstances or people. Freeing, isn't it?

The fourth hindrance is aversion which is also a form of attachment, but in the negative sense. The experiences or circumstances that one does not want to have, or is repulsed by, comprise aversions. Aversions are typically based on fear of the unknown, unfamiliar, or years of subconscious mechanical thought. Fear plays a big role in issues of low self-esteem. Attachments and aversions are both relative in that what is a good/bad experience or feeling for one may not be so good/bad for another. Any attachment or aversion springs from the imagination and can be construed as clinging, and therefore, in turn, suffering. By practicing detachment to either aversions or attachments, one can see a situation for what it is rather than what it is perceived to be.

Clinging to life or the fear of death is the final hindrance. It is self-preservation and the fundamental will to live in one's body on this Earth. This affliction is said to be experienced even by the very wise. It is ultimately the understanding of his affliction that will set us free. Each individual would come to terms with this hindrance by their own accord in relation to their own belief system regarding death and what happens when we leave our physical body. It is my sense that we are eternal in spirit.

The klesas are complex and interwoven. By increasing the understanding of each affliction,

one may begin to identify them when they surface in life. In knowing where the reaction, situation, or behaviour is derived, the individual may be better able to experience the true sense of the moment in awareness and without judgment. By remaining open, one is able to receive the perfection in every moment. It is a daily process to connect with oneself in understanding, but one that can create a life that is, for the most part, joyous, peaceful, and full of love.

With practice the sense of self-esteem will continuously improve and the feelings of a life connectedness will deepen. Try it for yourself as this all begins and ends with you. For, it is what you think that really matters.

“The mind is everything; what you think, you become” (Buddha)

Deborah L Shipley is a registered yoga teacher, healing practitioner, women's group facilitator, writer, and devoted mother.

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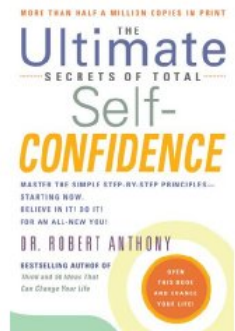
- Volunteering

Recommended Reading

The Ultimate Secrets of Total Self-Confidence (Paperback)
Dr. Robert Anthony.

A classic self-help book that changes people’s lives.

Dr. Robert Anthony reveals the secrets he has taught in seminars and workshops - simple step-by-step principles for building self-confidence, day-by-day. Advice is given on: tapping into creative imagination, clearing the mind of fear, worry, and guilt, the best ways to communicate, and the simplest ways to get perspective and set goals.



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Using Fear to Build Confidence

Lucinda Lions

Even the most confident people feel an element of fear when they step outside their comfort zone. Think of someone successful. That person has felt fear too, but they faced their fear and gave it a go anyway. You can use fear to build confidence too!

I went to see a recent client, a barrister, in court and watched in awe as he eloquently and confidently addressed the judge and jury. To see him all self-assured, you’d think he was born a natural public speaker. Not so. When he was a young adult and junior solicitor he suffered the usual gut wrenching nerves that many of us experience when we speak in front of people. But rather than letting his fear hold him back, he learnt the techniques of good public speaking, and then, despite feeling insecure and sick with nerves, he just did it, over and over and over again through public speaking engagements, debating opportunities and so on. This helped him build confidence.

He made mistakes along the way, but he also made something else: an absolute success of himself! No matter what the result, good or bad, each time he spoke publicly he faced his fear rather than allowing it to hold him back. And naturally over time, the fear lessened and confidence took its place.

The moral of the story is: **Fear it. Do it.**

When we’re faced with a fearful task most of us think: “I’ll do that when I’m more confident and experienced”. But we only build confidence and experience when we actually do it.

If our barrister waited for the day when he was confident about public speaking without actually doing anything, he’d probably be working in a different job today, still waiting, and probably riddled with “What ifs?”

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Fear restricts us from reaching our full potential, and sadly, it has put many out of business. The next time you are faced with a fearful task, build confidence by repeating the following **Positive Words** and **Affirmations** (also known as a POW-A script).

Read it. Repeat it. Believe it. Achieve it.

Positive Words

- I am going to overcome my fear
- Every time I do something that I fear I will grow in confidence
- Now is the time for me to do it
- I will equip myself with the skills to do this properly. I will learn, read and research
- I will seek input and feedback from knowledgeable people
- I will practice and prepare
- I will do my very best
- If I make mistakes, I will only get better as a result of making them
- I am a success every time I face my fear, no matter what the result
- Fear will no longer hold me back in life. I will grow, and so will my business!

Affirmations

- I am a success
- I am brave
- I am skilled
- I am prepared and ready for all opportunities.

Remember that you're already a success. Many people yearn to have their own business but never have the courage to start one up. Give yourself a pat on the back, you chose to leave the nest and fly solo. Face the fear in all areas of your business and you will build confidence and give yourself a chance to really soar.

Lucinda Lions is a Stress Management & Self Improvement consultant. Her popular CD Growth: Positive Words and Affirmations for Small Business Owners, & her relaxation audio downloads continually help people to stress less and soar more.

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