

## **Self-confidence**

Self-confidence can be defined as 'being self-assured and feeling or showing self-reliance' or 'faith in one's own abilities'. Self-confidence is often considered to be made up of a variety of factors, including physical presence, social confidence, status confidence, stage presence and peer independence. Confidence is a psychological quality related to (but distinct from) self-esteem.

High levels of self confidence can bring huge benefits to all areas of an individual's life, including relationships, career, social life and state of mind. Many people with low self-confidence aspire to be more self-confident, and the good news is that self-confidence is a skill that can often be developed. It is important to note, however, that the more pressure you (or others) put on yourself to live up to certain expectations, the more this could lead to anxiety and bruise confidence, so developing self-confidence at the right pace for you is important.

Your level of self-confidence can be seen in many ways, for example, your body language, your behaviour, how you speak and how you react to different situations. Self-confident people are generally more positive and believe in themselves and their abilities, whereas those with low self-confidence often have negative thoughts about themselves and their ability, which then leads to how they feel, act and behave.

If you have low self-confidence you may feel:

- Uncertain of yourself and your needs
- Unsure of who you are
- Shy and uneasy
- A sense of worthlessness
- Negative thoughts about your own abilities

Although your level of self-confidence can be altered at any time you choose, unfortunately there is usually no 'quick fix' and it can take time to build on your current level. The benefits of this though can be enormously rewarding.

## **Cause of low self-confidence**

Genetics and influences that have affected how your confidence has developed throughout your early life may have determined your current confidence level, however it is possible to alter this any time you choose. Everyone has their own strengths, abilities and skills to enhance their self-confidence, but many people are simply not fully aware of how to use these to achieve their desired level of self-confidence. It is also common to feel more self-confident in some areas of your life, but less self-confident in others, for example, you may feel really self-confident among a few close friends, but are not self-confident speaking to strangers.

## **Help for low self-confidence**

Counselling can help those suffering with low self-confidence. Techniques and strategies can be developed to build your self confidence and change current negative thinking. There are also a vast number of books with strategies and techniques for those who wish to develop their self-confidence.

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