

Exercise: Boost Your Self-Esteem

1. Write down about personal causes and experiences that affected your self-esteem. (e.g. Repeated experience of being put down, Possible experience of being treated in a particular way within a family framework, Criticism and negative messages from parents or school environment, Bullying from a parental figure or school peers, etc.)

2. Were there times when your self-esteem was a little better than it is now? Was there anything you were doing before, that you are not doing now (reading, writing, sport, cooking, meeting friends, gardening, taking a walk, traveling, painting, etc.)?

3. Consider the strengths below and choose the ones that describe you. You can add ones of your own:

accepting of others, brave, cheerful, committed, composed, confident, self-assured, cooperative, creative in problem-solving, curious, reliable, moral, honest, forgiving, generous, grateful, humble, fair, kind, compassionate, loving, loyal, open-minded, optimistic, patient, persistent, wise, punctual, rational, self-accepting, able to regulate emotions, sensitive, peaceful, sincere, spontaneous, consistent, trustworthy

4. Write down five positive statements about yourself that are meaningful, realistic, and true. (e.g. “I am a responsible member of my family,” or, “I am a supportive listener,” or, “I treat others with respect and I am open to new ideas.”)

Once you’ve completed your list, meditate on each one of these statements and the evidence for its accuracy for a minute or two

5. Create a list of positive affirmations personal to you.

Following is a list of statements of a positive inner dialogue:

- I accept myself because I realize that there is more to me than my current skill levels and shortcomings.
- I examine criticism for ways to improve, without questioning my worth as a human being.
- I notice and enjoy each achievement or progress, no matter how insignificant it may seem to me or others.

- I expect others to like and respect me.
- I can laugh at some of the ridiculous things I do every now and then.
- I enjoy making others feel happier and glad for the time that we share.

6. Challenge limiting beliefs about yourself.

- Identify your limiting beliefs about your abilities, personality, how you ought to act, other people, or even the world in general such as telling yourself “good things never last.”

- What would be a less extreme belief (or beliefs) that I might hold?

- What would be the advantages for me of holding the new belief(s) rather than

the limiting one(s)?

- What would be the potential disadvantages for me of holding the new belief(s) instead of the old one(s)?

Write down a list of pleasant activities you can do to help you take care of yourself.

You can inspire from the list by circling the activities you think will help you:

1. Soaking in the bathtub
2. Taking deep breaths
3. Recycling old items
4. Relaxing
5. Going to a movie in the middle of the week
6. Jogging, walking
7. Lying in the sun
8. Laughing
9. Listening to others
10. Reading magazines or newspapers
11. Hobbies (stamp collecting, model building)
12. Spending an evening with good friends

13. Practicing karate, judo, yoga
14. Repairing things around the house
15. Working on my car (bicycle)
16. Remembering the words and deeds of loving people
17. Wearing sexy clothes
18. Having quiet evenings
19. Taking care of my plants
20. Going swimming
21. Exercising
22. Having discussions with friends
23. Having family get-togethers
24. Singing around the house
25. Practicing religion (going to church, group praying, etc.)
26. Losing weight
27. Going to the beach
28. Thinking I'm an OK person
29. A day with nothing to do
30. Playing musical instruments
31. Doing arts and crafts
32. Making a gift for someone
33. Cooking
34. Writing short stories, novels, poems, or articles
35. Working
36. Reading books
37. Discussing books
38. Sightseeing
39. Gardening
40. Going to the beauty parlor
41. Early morning coffee and newspaper
42. Playing tennis
43. Play with children
44. Daydreaming
45. Eating a favorite food
46. Teaching
47. Photography
48. Playing with animals
49. Writing diary entries or letters
50. Cleaning
51. Taking children places
52. Dancing

53. Meditating
54. Having lunch with a friend
55. Thinking about people I like
56. Doing crossword puzzles
57. Dressing up and looking nice
58. Reflecting on how I've improved
59. Lighting candles
60. Listening to the radio
61. Being in the country
62. Making contributions to religious, charitable, or other groups
63. Doing something nice for my parents
64. Taking a shower
65. Canning, freezing, making preserves, etc.
66. Listening to the sounds of nature
67. Having friends come to visit
68. Helping someone
69. Hearing jokes
70. Improving my health (having my teeth fixed, getting new glasses, changing my diet)
71. Loaning something
72. Coaching someone
73. Getting up early in the morning
74. Saying prayers
75. Giving a massage
76. Doing housework or laundry
77. Going to the library
78. Building or watching a fire
