

#### **What is Self-esteem**

We all know that self-esteem sometimes referred to as **self-worth** or **self-respect**, can be an important part of success.

**Too little self-esteem** can leave people feeling defeated or depressed. It can also lead people to make bad choices, fall into destructive relationships, or fail to live up to their full potential.

**Too much self-esteem**, as exhibited in narcissistic personality disorder, can certainly be off-putting to others and can even damage personal relationships.



**Balance between the two extremes**

Self-esteem levels at the extreme high and low ends of the spectrum can be harmful, so ideally, it's best **to strike a balance** somewhere in the middle.

A realistic yet positive view of yourself is generally considered the ideal. But what exactly is self-esteem? Where does it come from and what influence does it really have on our lives?



In psychology, the term self-esteem is used to describe a person's overall sense of **self-worth** or **personal value**. In other words, how much you **appreciate and like yourself**.

- Self-esteem is often seen as a **personality trait**, which means that it tends to be **stable and enduring**.

- Self-esteem can involve a variety of **beliefs about yourself**, such as the **appraisal** of your own appearance, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors.

### Self-Esteem vs Success

Self-esteem can play a significant role in your motivation and success throughout your life.



**The vicious circle**

**Low self-esteem** may hold you back from succeeding at school or work because you don't believe yourself to be capable of success.

By contrast, having a **healthy self-esteem** can help you achieve because you navigate life with a positive, **assertive attitude** and believe you can **accomplish your goals**.



### Self-Esteem Theories



The need for self-esteem plays an important role in psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which depicts **self-esteem as one of the basic human motivations**.

Maslow suggested that people need both:

- esteem from other people as well as
- inner self-respect.

### Self-actualization

Both of these needs must be fulfilled in order for an individual to grow as a person and achieve **self-actualization**.

### Factors That Can Influence Self-Esteem

As you might imagine, there are different factors that can influence self-esteem.

- (1) **Genetic factors** that help shape overall personality can play a role, but it is often
- (2) **our experiences** that form the basis for overall self-esteem.

Those who consistently receive overly critical or negative assessments from caregivers, family members, and friends, for example, will likely experience problems with low self-esteem.

Additionally, your

(3) **inner thinking**,

(4) **age**,

(5) any **potential illnesses**,

(6) **disabilities**, or physical limitations, and

(7) your **job** can affect your self-esteem.

### Signs of Healthy Self-Esteem

You probably have a good sense of who you are if you exhibit the following signs:

- Confidence
- Ability to say no
- Positive outlook
- Ability to see overall strengths and weaknesses and accept them
- Negative experiences don't impact overall perspective
- Ability to express your needs

### Signs of Low Self-Esteem

You may need to work on how you perceive yourself if you exhibit any of these signs of poor self-esteem:

- Negative outlook
- Lack of confidence
- Inability to express your needs
- Focus on your weaknesses
- Feelings of shame, depression, or anxiety
- Belief that others are better than you
- Trouble accepting positive feedback
- Fear of failure

