

Consequences of low self-esteem

Low self-esteem can have devastating consequences

- * It can create anxiety, stress, loneliness and an increased chance of depression
- * It can cause problems with relationships
- * It can impair job performance
- * It can lead to under achievement and vulnerability to drug and alcohol abuse

This can turn into a vicious cycle, negative consequences turn into negative self image which can take a person into lower and lower self-esteem which then will end up heightening the consequences of low self-esteem.



Three steps to better self-esteem

Before you can begin to change your self-esteem you must believe you can change it. Change will not happen quickly or easily but it can happen. You are not powerless! Once you are willing to change your self-esteem there are steps that can be taken:

Step 1: Rebut the inner critic

The most important step is to begin to challenge the negative inner voice inside of you.

Step 2: Practice self nurturing

Start to challenge past negative experiences or messages by nurturing and caring for yourself in ways that show you that you are valuable, competent, deserving and lovable.

Step 3: Get help from others

Getting help from others is very important but it can also be the most difficult step. People with low self-esteem often do not look for help from others because they do not feel they deserve it. Since low self-esteem often comes from negative experiences and messages from the past, you may need help from others in the present to help challenge the negative actions. Some ways to find help from others is to ask friends for support, get help from teachers or other helpers, or talk to a therapist or counselor.

Self-Esteem



Box 403, 203 Patricia St.
Hudson Bay, SK S0E 0Y0
Phone~ (306) 865-3064
Fax~ (306) 865-3391

hbfamilyandsupport@sasktel.net
www.hbfamilyandsupport.ca

24 Hour Crisis Line
(North East Region)
1-800-611-6349

What is Self-Esteem?

Most people's thoughts and feelings about themselves change depending on what goes on in their day.

Your self-esteem, however, is more than normal 'ups and downs' through your day.

For people with good self-esteem, normal 'ups and downs' may lead to temporary changes on how they feel about themselves, but is very limited.

But, for people with poor self-esteem these normal 'ups and downs' may make all the difference in the world.

Where does self-esteem come from?

Our self-esteem develops throughout our lives through our experiences with different people and activities.

Our experiences in childhood greatly affect how we develop our basic self-esteem. When we are growing up our successes and failures as well as how others treat us all contribute to the creation of our self-esteem.

Healthy self-esteem

Childhood experiences that lead to healthy self esteem include:

- * Being praised
- * Being listened too
- * Being spoken to respectfully
- * Getting attention and hugs
- * Experiencing success in sports and in school
- * Having great friends

Low self-esteem

Childhood experiences that lead to low self-esteem:

- * Being harshly criticized
- * Being yelled at or beaten
- * Being ignored or teased
- * Expected to be 'perfect'
- * Failures in sports or in school

People with poor self-esteem were often given the impression that failed experiences were failures of their self worth.

THREE faces of low self-esteem

Low self-esteem isn't always easy to recognize. Here are some faces that low self-esteem may wear:

The Imposter: : Acts happy and successful but is really scared of failure. Needs continued success to maintain the mask of positive self-esteem which may lead to procrastination, competition and burn out.

The Rebel: Acts like opinions of others don't matter. Lives with constant anger that they are 'not good enough'. Needs to prove continuously that others judgments don't hurt which may lead too blaming others, breaking rules or fighting authority.

The Loser: Acts hopeless and unable to cope with the world. Uses self pity as a shield against fear of changing his or her life. Looks constantly to others for guidance which may lead too a lack of assertiveness skills, under-achievement and reliance on others in their relationships..

