

## Building Self Esteem

O You who believe! Take care of your own selves; he who errs cannot hurt you when you are on the right path. (5:105)

### Understanding self-esteem

Our self-esteem is how we value and perceive ourselves. It encompasses what we believe about ourselves and our abilities.

### Why self-esteem

If you have low self-esteem you:

- feel you do not have much worth
- are unable to make decisions or assert yourself
- blame yourself for things that aren't your fault
- are unable to recognise your strengths
- think others are so much better than you in everything

### Appreciating the Human being

- Representative of Allah – 2:30
- Dignified by Allah – 17:70
- Responsibility in the world – 33:72
- Capable of great things – 2:31
- Potential to change – 55:29
- Loves to do good – 49:7

### Losing self esteem

- 1) Not understanding the position of the human being
- 2) Lack of self-knowledge
- 3) Comparing/Conforming to others
- 4) Need for popularity
- 5) Memories of the past

### Gaining self esteem

- 1) Reflecting on the self; understanding your strengths and your uniqueness
- 2) Having a goal in life
- 3) Paying attention to personal grooming
- 4) Being careful about your diet
- 5) Being grateful
- 6) Challenging yourself

One way to measure self-esteem is to evaluate your ability to authentically be your true self. Often people look for self-confidence and self-respect everywhere except within themselves. They are constantly seeking approval and respect of others. This quest is doomed to failure because it is only in the way we respond to ourselves that creates the feeling of peace and success.

### The Critical inner voice

Most of us are familiar with those nagging thoughts that tell us we are not good enough, that cast doubt on our goals and undermine our accomplishments. Every person is divided; part of us is goal-directed and self-possessed, while another part is self-critical, self-denying, and even self-destructive. This "anti-self" perpetuates a negative thought process

The critical inner voice is formed out of painful early life experiences in which we witnessed or experienced hurtful attitudes toward us or those close to us. As we grow up, we unconsciously adopt and integrate this pattern of destructive thoughts toward ourselves and others. When we fail to identify and separate from this inner critic, we allow it to impact our behavior and shape the direction of our lives. It may sabotage our successes or our relationships, preventing us from living the lives we want to lead and becoming the people we seek to be

(Extracted from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/compassion-matters/201305/4-ways-overcome-your-inner-critic>)

### Self-esteem and the Past

A lot of what we think about ourselves comes from past experiences. It is based on what people have told us about ourselves, since childhood. Some of these memories, especially the negative ones, get ingrained in us and it is difficult to overcome them. To truly understand ourselves we will have to break free of those limitations and counter the memories of the past.

Learn from the mistakes of the past and remember that change is always possible. Things were probably not as bad as you think they were. We often don't think about the positive things about ourselves from the past. Reminding yourself of those can help you feel better about yourself.

### Self-esteem and Pride

An inflated sense of self-esteem becomes pride, when you think you are better than anyone else. A healthy sense of self-esteem is a realistic realization of your own self-worth along with an acceptance of your faults and limitations. A low sense of self-esteem is not realizing your strengths and abilities.