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## NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

### Self Esteem

The way you feel about yourself is called *self-esteem*.

If you feel confident and good about yourself, that's called **high self-esteem**, and if you feel bad about yourself and have no confidence, that is called *low self-esteem*. Self-esteem is the sum of *self-confidence* (a feeling of personal capacity) and *self-respect* (a feeling of personal worth). Everyone lacks confidence sometimes but people with low self-esteem are unhappy or unsatisfied with themselves most of the time.

### What does high self-esteem look like?

Someone who has high self-esteem is usually happy, energetic and hopeful. Additionally someone with high self-esteem may feel that they're OK as a person, believe in their own ability, enjoy the world around them and look forward to a good future.

### What does low self-esteem look like?

Some-one who very regularly feels unhappy, and has little confidence in themselves as a person may be low in self-esteem. Low self-esteem also occurs when someone feels as if they are not as good as other people in some way, feel little hope for the future, feel victimised, or see only negatives things in the world around them.

### Self-esteem building

Self-esteem is strongly related to how you view and react to the things that happen in your life. People with low self-esteem have low resilience and therefore are unable to adapt to situation in a positive way. Suggestions for building self-esteem include:

- **“Talk to yourself positively”** – Don't be too hard on yourself, value who you are and be kind and supportive of the actions and choices you make.
- **“Challenge negative ‘self-talk’”** – every time you criticise yourself, stop and look for evidence that the criticism is true. You will realise that much of your self-doubt and criticism is unfounded. Tell yourself a positive thing every day.
- **“Don't compare yourself to others”** – Individuality is good. Be unique, express your own style and personality. Everyone is different and has different values. Accept who you are.
- **“Acknowledge the positive”** – Always acknowledge good things that you have achieved, and good qualities about yourself. Remind yourself, write a list and refer to it regularly.
- **“Forget the past”** – Don't re-live past upset or disappointment; pave a new pathway for yourself with a focus of here and now.
- **“Have fun”** – schedule enjoyable events and activities into every week. Enjoy the company of others and have some “me time” to unwind and relax.
- **“Exercise”** –boosts energy and wakes the brain up.
- **“Be assertive”** – Be direct and honest when communicating with others, and don't be afraid to let others know what your needs, wants, feelings, beliefs and opinions are. Also give the same opportunity of honest and direct communication to others.