

CODE Community Support Group – Confidence

“Confidence is the most beautiful thing you can possess.”

Let’s re-set and refresh ourselves, carry out this simple task to bring you back into your body by carrying out this simple body scanning technique:

You need to focus on each different body part in turn, checking in. Think – How are they feeling? Are you holding in any tension?

Move down your body and concentrate to try to consciously relax each of these in isolation.

- Start at your head, then cover each section as follows:
 - Eyes
 - Jaw
 - Neck
 - Shoulders
 - Back
 - Chest
 - Arms
 - Stomach
 - Hips
 - Legs
 - Feet
 - Toes

Once you have completed this exercise, you will have identified your areas of tension and be more comfortable.

You can use this technique whenever you feel tense and it should help you to move into the rest of the day feeling grounded and confident.

Confidence and high self-esteem are an important part of everyone’s lives, but it can be affected in many different ways and everyone is different. No matter what knocks your confidence, **it is important to remember that you have the right to feel good about yourself.**

If we have high self-esteem, we feel good about ourselves. And if we feel confident, we feel like there are things we’re good at. But sometimes, our confidence gets knocked, or we even feel that we don’t like ourselves very much.

We can all feel like this at times, but when we feel like this for a long time, it can become a problem.

This week we will look at what self-esteem and confidence is, as well as what can affect it and also how to build yourself back up.

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how you think and feel about yourself. Your self-esteem can affect how much you:



- * Like and value yourself as a person
- * Believe in yourself and the things you can do
- * Stand up for yourself when under pressure
- * Are willing to try new or difficult things
- * Move on from mistakes without blaming yourself unfairly
- * Believe you matter and are good enough
- * Believe you deserve happiness

Your level of self-esteem will directly affect the way you feel about yourself. If you have high self-esteem, you will think and feel more positively about yourself. Likewise, if you have low self-esteem, you are more likely to think and feel more negatively about yourself.

What is Confidence?

Confidence isn't about being brash or outgoing, you can be shy or quiet and still be confident. Even when someone is the loudest person in the room, it doesn't mean they are feeling the most confident inside. Some people use loudness as a deflection away from their low confidence level.

Confidence is about:

- **Understanding and accepting you for who you are** – like being proud of your hair colour, not being great at sports, being proud of your sexuality or not wanting to change yourself to fit in with others.
- **Believing in yourself, your abilities and ideas** – this could be feeling like you can learn something new, knowing you can ask someone something without cold feet or even knowing a suggestion you make is a good one.

What can affect confidence and self-esteem?

Your personal experiences will have a direct impact on your confidence and self-esteem levels. Positive experiences, like doing well on a test, getting a compliment, getting praise or even doing something nice for a friend or neighbour can boost your confidence and self-esteem. Likewise, Negative experiences like being teased about your experiences or going through a break-up can lower your confidence and self-esteem.

What directly affects you can differ from person to person as everyone is unique. Some examples of some experiences that might affect you either positively or negatively, are as follows:

- ✓ Your results and university
- ✓ Social media or adverts
- ✓ The level of support you receive from people you trust
- ✓ Your body image and how you feel about your appearance
- ✓ Your achievement or skills

Some experiences may only have a negative effects on our confidence and self-esteem, such as:

- ❖ Physical or mental health problems that affect our ability to do certain things or be understood by others
- ❖ Peer pressure to fit in
- ❖ Pressure to achieve in exams, sport or other hobbies
- ❖ Being bullied
- ❖ Experiencing stigma or discrimination
- ❖ Moving away from where we feel safe
- ❖ Family problems
- ❖ Relationship problems

You may have had other experiences that isn't in the list, remember... everyone is different.

How can I build my confidence or self-esteem?

This can take time and a lot of practice; it isn't going to be a quick fix. What helps you now, might not be the same thing as what helps in the future. There are still lots of things you can do to improve the way you feel about yourself and in turn, boost your abilities.

It may feel like a big step to make changes, start by trying a couple of new things each week until you find out what works for you. Go at your own pace and don't compare yourself to others. Most importantly, don't put too much pressure on yourself – small changes can make a big difference.

- **Be kind to yourself** – Recognise and know your unkind thoughts, answer the questions you are asking of yourself as if you would do to a friend.
 - Remember it's ok to make mistakes.
 - Avoid comparing yourself to others
 - Repeat positive statements to yourself
- **Look after yourself** – try to sleep well, eat a balanced diet, stay active, spend time outside in nature and avoid drugs and alcohol
- **Focus on the positives** – Celebrate your successes
- **Spend time with people** – Have fun with family and friends, or connect with someone you identify with and trust.
 - Be kind to others.
- **Learn to assert yourself** – this means giving your opinion or saying what you want or need, or how you feel without being rude. It's about standing up for yourself whilst also being respectful of other people's views and feelings.
- **Do things you enjoy** – Listen to music, play a video game, go for a walk or something else. Let yourself have fun, without feeling guilty.
- **Act confident, even when you don't feel it** – You could start by practising in the mirror and work up to be confident in front of others.
- **Try something new** – It can help you develop a skill and meet new people. Learn a new language, learn how to play an instrument or do something creative.
- **Know your limits and don't push yourself too hard**
- **Make an online blog or mood board**

- **Meditation** – remember, CODE has specially designed sessions available at codestudents.co/meditate
- **Keep a box or diary of achievements**
- **Don't be afraid to unfollow negative people on social media**
- **Identify what is unhelpful for you**
- **Practice self care** – take time for yourself
- **Think back in time** – forgiving yourself is really important

Take the time at the end of this session to look at 2 reason's why you think you might suffer with low confidence and self-esteem. Looking at the points above, look at ways on how you can tackle those points.

1.
.....
2.
.....
1.
.....
2.
.....

CODE have plenty of ways to help you keep healthy each week...

Zumba

Online
Every Monday at 6pm
<https://codestudents.co/Fitness>



Yoga

Online
Every Tuesday at 6pm
<https://codestudents.co/Fitness>



Core

Online
Every Thursday at 6pm
<https://codestudents.co/Fitness>



Meditation

Online
Every Saturday
<https://codestudents.co/meditate>



CODE Community Support Group

(limited to 15)
Every Wednesday
1pm – 3pm in the Communal Area
<http://codestudents.co/support>



Grab and Go table

Pick up snacks, food, drinks or a book from our motivation library
Every Wednesday – 1pm – 4pm
Block B Foyer

