

Development of Self Esteem When it is Low: A Psychological Perspective

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Introduction

Self-esteem refers to how you think about yourself. Since self-esteem fluctuates throughout life, you are bound to have low self-esteem at some stage. This can make you doubt your ability or make you feel like you're destined to fail. Although overcoming low self-esteem is difficult, it is possible.

Signs of low self-esteem

Poor self-esteem manifests itself in a variety of ways. Emotional symptoms of low self-esteem, according to Sabrina Romanoff, PsyD, a clinical psychologist at Lenox Hill Hospital, include:

- Perpetual fear of failure
- Difficulty accepting compliments
- Preoccupation with personal flaws
- A proclivity to undervalue oneself

Low self-esteem patterns, according to Aimee Daramus, PsyD, a clinical psychologist at Urban Balance, include:

- A desire to satisfy others
- Inability to say no
- Avoiding confrontation
- Excessive apologizing
- Overreacting to conflicts
- Fear of loved ones leaving them

Since you're worried about how people will view you, these feelings and behaviors may cause you to avoid doing things you enjoy.

Low self-esteem does not cause physical symptoms in and of itself, but it is linked to disorders that do, such as anxiety or depression. Stomach aches, migraines, and fatigue may all be symptoms of these mental health issues.

Causes of low-self esteem

Low self-esteem can be caused by a variety of factors, according to Annie M. Henderson, a certified professional life coach and licensed professional counsellor with her own virtual practice. Causes of low self-esteem include: Bullying, Violence, Trauma, Academic challenges without parental help, Authority figures who disapprove.

Parents may also contribute to their children's low self-esteem in a variety of ways. One way is to place a higher value on their child's successes than on the effort they put in to achieve them. When children are rewarded for their accomplishments, such as winning a game or receiving a reward, it may lead to low self-esteem before the next tangible achievement, according to Romanoff.

How to build self-esteem

1. Seek out relationships with people who care for you. It's easier to root out your own self-doubts when you feel reliably encouraged in your platonic and romantic relationships.
2. Do stuff that you love and are good at. According to Romanoff, "this offers positive encouragement and feelings of proficiency and capability."
3. Any small victory should be celebrated. Daramus advises that you balance your accomplishments with your challenges. It's all too tempting to get caught up in the negative and overlook the positive. Give each outcome the same amount of consideration, whether it's good or bad.
4. Talk to yourself as if you were a neighbor. Consider if your inner thoughts and perceptions are those of a cheerleader or a bully. For example, instead of saying I should have tried harder, say I made a good effort.
5. Your pessimistic feelings should be questioned. Just because you think something, that doesn't mean it's true. When you have a negative self-perception, question it and substitute it with a constructive one.

If you find low self-esteem impacting your life, such as in relationships, at work, or in your mood, Romanoff recommends seeing a mental health professional.

Parents may also play an important role in their child's self-esteem development and maintenance. Parents, for example, should:

- Teach children to set boundaries
- Actively work on your own self-esteem
- Reinforce and applaud internal factors such as effort and dedication rather than grades on their report card.