Self-esteem

Self esteem attitude that allows individuals to have positive yet realistic views of themselves and their situations. In other words, liking yourself or not, thinking positive
or negative about yourself defines self esteem. Most people's feelings and thoughts about themselves fluctuate somewhat based on their daily experiences. Your selfesteem,however, is something more fundamental than the normal "ups and downs" associated with situational changes.

Self-confident people trust their own abilities, have a general sense of control in their lives, and believe that, within reason, they will be able to do what they wish, plan, and expect. People who aren't self-confident depend excessively on the approval of others in order to feel good about themselves. They tend to avoid taking risks because they fear failure and they generally do not expect to be successful. Our self-esteem develops and evolves throughout our lives as we build an image of ourselves through our experiences with different people and activities. Experiences during our childhood play a particularly large role in the shaping of our basic selfesteem. When we were growing up, our successes (and failures) and how we were treated by the members of our immediate family, by our teachers, coaches, religious authorities, and by our peers, all contributed to the creation of our basic self-esteem.

Low self esteem can cause;

- Anxiety, stress, loneliness and increased likelihood for depression,
- Problems with friendships and relationships,
- Serious impairment in academic and job performance,
- Underachievement and
- Increased vulnerability to drug and alcohol abuse.

For better self esteem...

1. Give yourself credit for everything you try. By focusing on what you can do, you applaud yourself for efforts rather than emphasizing end products.
2. Take Risks. Approach new experiences as opportunities to learn rather than occasions to win or lose.
3. Do not label yourself by saying "lazy", "ugly", and "stupid" to yourself.
4. Do not let other people criticize your character. The criticisms should be directed to your behaviors, not to your character. Use the criticisms as an opportunity to change your negative behaviors and to grow in a more positive way.
5. Use a positive language while talking to yourself. Everyone can have negative thoughts about his/herself once in a while. However, these thoughts may demotivate you. First, try to find out when you have these negative thoughts about yourself, then try to stop them.

Negative thoughts:

a. All-or-none thinking: "I'm a failure in every way."
b. Focusing on the negative: "Something bad is going to happen in this course, too."

c. Magnification of Negative/Minimization of Positive. "I've answered four questions out
of five, but making one a mistake makes me thinks I'm stupid".
d. Uncritical Acceptance of Emotions as Truth. "I feel ugly so it must be true."
e. Perfectionism: "Everyone should have a career plan when they come to college. I don't so there must be something wrong with me."
f. Labeling. "I am a loser and it's my fault.". "No one likes me. I'm not a good friend."

6. Try to change the negative statements with positive ones. Try to use more realistic and positive messages about yourself and your life.
 For example:
• "Sometimes" instead of "always".
• "Something, somewhere" instead of "everything, all"
• "I'm not good at statistics as I'm good in other things, but my essays are really good," instead of "I'm always failing."

Referanslar

Nichols, J.(2012). Moving from Self Esteem to Self Acceptance. *Kai Tiaki Nursing New Zealand*, 18 (8): 28-29.

For additional help:

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