



## HOW DO I IMPROVE MY SELF-ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE?

Firstly, it needs to be acknowledged that we all lack confidence from time to time, this is completely natural and part of being human! However, individuals with low self-esteem might notice that they are unhappy or unsatisfied with themselves most of the time. If this resonates with you, read ahead for some tips and strategies for boosting your self-esteem and confidence.

### 1. Identify the areas in your life where you do feel confident

Often when we are lacking in confidence or self-esteem it can feel all encompassing. However, it is important to identify that while we may lack confidence in some areas (e.g. in social settings, meeting new people, presenting at university or work etc.), we may feel more confident in other areas (e.g. when doing familiar tasks at work, engaging in a hobby, spending time with a close friend etc.). Figuring out the areas in our life where we do feel confident can be helpful for exploring what mastery of something feels like, and thinking about how we can transfer those skills to the areas we are feeling less comfortable in.

### 2. Self-compassion

Lack of confidence or low self-esteem can be fuelled by critical self-talk. Understandably, we are not going to feel good about ourselves if our mind is being unnecessarily mean and judgmental! An important step for building confidence and self-esteem is noticing when our 'inner-critic' is loud, and starting to communicate to ourselves with more compassion. This means talking to ourselves as we would talk to somebody that we truly care about. Giving yourself reassurance like "you are trying your best" and acknowledging that nobody is perfect can go a long way!

### 3. Values

We all have different values - we choose different careers, choose to engage in different hobbies, make different decisions relating to relationships and families. This is what makes us unique! But think about it, do your decisions about how you choose to live your life always align with your values? Sometimes we get swept up in the momentum of life and forget to check in on whether we actually want to be doing the things we are doing. If we spend our time engaged in tasks that are inconsistent with the way we want to be living, it makes sense that we would feel unfulfilled and unhappy with ourselves. So ask yourself, what do you value? What are the components in your life that are most important to you? Are you currently living a life consistent with your values, or is there room for improvement? How can you go about acting more consistently with your values? Maybe there is no quick fix, but working towards this will help to boost your self-esteem, because we tend to feel a lot better about ourselves when we feel we are living a fulfilling life.

### 4. Practice

Like with any new skill, the only way to improve is through practice. Once we have figured out the contexts in which we would like to feel more confident, the next step is to expose ourselves to these situations and build up an evidence base that you can do it! Granted, it is normal to feel nervous and uncomfortable about this, however with time and practice it will only get easier

Building self-esteem is not something that happens overnight. It takes life experience, and effortful practice of these and other strategies to help continue to build confidence. For further support give our team a call to book an appointment on (03) 9882-8874.