- Self-confidence

7 STEPS TO GREATER CONFIDENCE!



Self-development coach, author and former soap star Holly Matthews says you can discover a more confident version of you with a few simple mindset tweaks.

YOU MAY THINK SOME PEOPLE are just born confident while others shyly quake on the edges of life. Thankfully, you'd be wrong. Confidence can be cultivated; self-belief can be practised, and you can go from feeling unsure to unstoppable with a few tweaks and a desire for change.

Perhaps it's not all areas of your life. Maybe you're confident at work but fall apart in your social life, or you're confident as a mum but lack confidence in your appearance. None of this is set in stone, and even the most confident looking people you know will still have their moments of doubt. Consider the areas you find challenging and then start by reading these eight confidence-building tips to learn exactly how you can begin your journey to being more self-assured.

Firstly, no one stays the same forever, and as we get older it's easy to lose ourselves among all the adult responsibilities with which we're surrounded. Take time to explore your current likes, dislikes, wants, and desires. They may not be the same as they once were, and that's okay. You don't have to stay the same forever. Celebrate your quirks by recognising that some of your "worst" qualities may also be your best. Are you messy? Perhaps this means you're also creative. Are you impulsive? Maybe this means you're also brave enough to jump in and give life a go. Changing the disempowering labels you give yourself can help you see the good in all that you are.

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WATCH YOUR MOUTH

How you talk about yourself is key to the reality you create. If you use self-deprecating language – or, worse still, critical language – when talking about yourself, you chip away at your self-esteem. Find kinder words, even if they aren't the fawning adulation you'd like to get to. Thinking, "I'm ugly and terrible at everything" could be changed to, "I'm okay, and I learn new things every day".

Depending on your current inner dialogue, it may take a little while to get to the point of complimenting yourself but start by softening the tone and work your way up.

TRY IT

Listen to how you talk about yourself both internally and externally over the next week and delete and edit your words to something kinder in real time.

'Make bold moves toward the things in life you want and build resilience to setbacks'

LEARN TO BE UNCOMFORTABLE

The only way to build confidence is to take action. This means starting new things, failing, getting back up, and giving things another go. This also means being willing to make mistakes and learning to sit with the discomfort of it. Avoidance breeds doubt, but the antidote to this is making bold moves toward the things in life you want and building resilience to any setbacks you face along the way.

ACCEPT COMPLIMENTS

You may have been socially conditioned to believe it is boastful or conceited to accept compliments with grace, but studies show that welcoming

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compliments boosts your mood, heightens your confidence levels, and increases performance and motivation.

TRY IT

Rather than the habitual compliment "bat away" you might be accustomed to, try saying only the words "thank you" and letting the compliment land fully.

ACT "AS IF"

"Fake it till you make it" has become a rather contentious phrase, perhaps because people believe it means skimming the deeper work needed to build real confidence. But it's actually a powerful tool that should not be sidestepped. It helps you to show up with a different energy and intention, and although at first it may feel performative, with time and the support of other confidence-building tools) you will no longer be acting but simply being the confident and self-assured you.

TRY IT

Acting "as if" means prior to doing something, asking yourself, "What would the most confident version of me do in this instance?" and then acting as if you already were this version.

BE EMBARRASSING

Putting yourself in situations that might be embarrassing is an excellent way of weakening the fear of what other people think about you. Examples might be wearing something unusual, singing karaoke, or dancing in the street. Remind yourself that most people are far more concerned about what they are doing than anything you might be doing. Have fun, create great stories and learn to laugh at any awkwardness, rather than let it stop you.

TRY IT

Write a list of ideas you can start doing that challenge you to go out of your comfort zone and might make you seem foolish to others.

BE SPECIFIC

Start articulating exactly what it is you want. Be detailed and explicit in telling people what that is. The people pleaser in you might find this challenging but start small and work your way up. A good starting point would be to confidently state, in the most precise way, how you have your tea or coffee: the colour, whether you have milk or no milk, what kind of cup, and whether you have sugar. It is surprising to note how many people will have a "however it comes", attitude, which can quickly become a mantra for their whole lives.

CHECK YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Although most of the work you do on building confidence comes from within, it's important to note the impact your surroundings will also have on you. Just as the famous Italian architect and painter Michelangelo sculpted David, you are "sculpted" by your closest, based on how they see you. This is known as the Michelangelo effect, whereby how your close friends, family and partner perceive you can often lead to you becoming that very thing. If your environment is negative, being self-confident will be much harder.

TRY IT

Make sure to find spaces and people that believe in you until you start believing in yourself.

● ***Find Your Confidence: The No-Nonsense Guide To Self-Belief,*** **by Holly Matthews (£15, Bloomsbury) is out now. Follow Holly at instagram.com/iamhollymatthews and at iamhollymatthews.com.**





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