The Secrets of Creating Personal Confidence

Includes the 50 Confidence Building Strategies Used by Top Performing People

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This ebook will help you build the confidence you need for happiness and success.

Please be sure to start by reading the instructions page, the introduction, and the two page Table of contents.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my husband, Larry, who has given me the motivation and the encouragement for my confidence journey,

It is also dedicated to our grown children Mike, Jeff, and Dan who are reaping the rewards of having positive parents.
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Instructions

WHAT IS AN E-BOOK?
An eBook is a PDF computer document of a book that can be read by any computer that has the software program Adobe Acrobat Reader. You probably have Adobe Acrobat Reader on your computer, but if you don’t, or if you don’t have the latest version, this software is available free from Adobe. You may download it free at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html

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You Don’t Have to Live Without Confidence

Life was not meant to be watched on a TV screen. It was meant to be participated in – to be lived! The problem with modern society is that it is too easy to live a vicarious life watching others live instead of doing the living yourself. I believe the reason there is such an epidemic of low self-confidence is that people aren’t participating enough in life to develop their confidence.

But, don’t despair, even if you have had low confidence all of your life, you can change the way you feel. You can grow your confidence and participate in life. You can live your dreams. This book will tell you how.

You Can’t Just Wish for Confidence

To get confidence you must get out of your comfort zone, and try new things before you feel confident. Your confidence grows as you become more skilled. That takes practice, perseverance, and an awareness of your progress.

My Story

I used to have very low confidence. I would look at people who were vibrant and full of self-confidence and say to myself, “I guess I wasn’t born with confidence, and they were.”

I had resigned my life to low self-confidence until one weekend in 1989 when I attended a three day “Born to Win” seminar given by Zig Ziglar. As we sang “Happy Birthday” to ourselves the last day of the seminar, I truly felt that I had been re-born with a positive outlook on life. I left that seminar with a passion to create a positive thinking life for myself and my family.

I started listening to Zig’s motivational tapes, I read his books as well as every self-help book I could find on positive thinking from other authors. I went to seminars led by many motivational speakers. I literally devoured all the information I could find on personal growth and positive thinking, and
gradually I started feeling better.

**Miracles Started Occurring**

I began to notice physical changes. I had always had poor posture, even though I tried hard to remember to stand up straight. Gradually, my posture started improving all by itself. Another miracle – every year I usually got several colds that turned into sinus infections lasting weeks. The miracle was that without doing anything different, this gradually reduced to only one or two a year.

But, most of all, I felt better emotionally. I had more energy and more enthusiasm for life. I joined organizations and met new people. I did things I would have been fearful of doing before. My family noticed the difference as they observed my new positive outlook.

I wanted to share what I had learned from so many positive thinkers, and, since my first career was an elementary school teacher, I created my own seminars adapting what had worked best for me into a workshop format. I opened The Confidence Center in 1991 and several years later created our online confidence center www.ConfidenceCenter.com.

**How to Use This Book**

In *The Secrets of Self-Confidence*, I share with you the secrets of building confidence that I have learned through the years in an easy to read format.

I suggest you start at the beginning of the book and read it through because the chapters are in a progressive order. As you read this book, bookmark the pages you want to return to.

There are many exercises to do in this book, and because *The Secrets of Self-Confidence* is an eBook, simply print out the pages that you are working with, punch holes in the sides and put them in a loose leaf notebook.

Enjoy your journey into self-confidence. It will be the adventure of your lifetime.

Harriet Meyerson
Confidence is the hinge on the door to success.
Mary O’Hare Dumas

You must do the things you think you cannot do.
Eleanor Roosevelt

Don’t let life discourage you; everyone who got where he is had to begin where he was.
Richard L. Evans
The Secret of Self-Confidence in Three Easy Steps

Confidence doesn't appear in your life all at once. You grow in confidence a little bit at a time by overcoming obstacles and accepting challenges. The word ACT spells out the three easy steps to building confidence.

A stands for ACT.
You have to do something. This means you have to take some action before you build any confidence.

C stands for COURAGE.
It takes a lot of courage to act before you have the confidence, especially when you are confronted with difficult obstacles and challenges. The amount of courage you need depends on the risk.

You can get encouragement from other people, or from inspirational books, tapes, poems, and quotes. However, belief in your values creates the strongest courage. If you know in your heart that something is the right thing to do, even though it may be difficult or risky, there is no hesitation.

For example, a few years ago my husband and I drove our boat into the middle of the lake during a powerful storm in order to rescue a man, woman, and their three year old little girl whose small sailboat had capsized. The courage to risk our own lives was created instantly by our own value system – our belief that it was the right thing to do.

Most actions are not quite that risky, but examining your values will create the internal courage you need to act and begin growing in confidence.

T stands for TARGET.
You have to aim in the direction of your goal. When you are clear about the results you want, you will focus your energies on the right actions.

Getting clarity involves asking yourself three important questions:
1. Why do I want to do this?
2. What obstacles will I have to overcome?
3. What resources are available to help me?
You Cannot Buy Confidence

We live in a culture where people get their sense of self worth by proving themselves valuable. When we fall short of our own or other people's expectations we lose our confidence, and our self-esteem is damaged.

You do not need fancy clothes, an expensive car or a top position in your company to feel good about yourself. Confidence cannot be built by trying to impress others.

Confidence is built when you pursue interests that are meaningful for you regardless of monetary reward or status. You will feel more confident when you are making a worthwhile contribution to your family, job, or community while doing what you love.

Three Exercises That Will Boost Your Confidence

1. On one side of a page list the things you have either purchased or done just to impress others.

2. On the other side of the page list the things you have either purchased or done because they brought you joy and a sense of satisfaction when you made the purchase.

3. On a separate page list ways in which you can spend your time and money on things that are meaningful for you.
Act First - Then You Will Feel Confident

So many people want to wait until they feel confident before they try something new. However, the action must come first so that the confidence can grow through the process of practice, learning from our mistakes, and improving. With that in mind, here's what you can do to act confident when you don't feel confident.

1. Believe that you will benefit just from trying something new. The effort alone will help build your character.

2. Believe that you will succeed with the proper training and effort. Look at your past successes, and remember how you had to grow into them.

3. Separate your personality from the task. Pretend you are an actor or actress portraying a role of a very confident person who is not afraid of making mistakes or looking foolish. After you finish your task you can go back to being you. With practice this new role will become part of your personality.

4. Smile. It will give you courage.

5. Breathe deeply. It will give you energy.

6. Sit or stand tall. It will make you feel and appear confident.

7. Take that first step. You will be on your way to success and confidence.
Create A Personal Mission Statement

Most businesses have a mission statement, but what about you as a person? Do you know what you stand for? You can clarify that by creating a personal mission statement.

Having a mission statement can help you set your goals and make difficult decisions. You will be able to see what solution best fits with your mission statement.

LIST YOUR VALUES
First list the values that are most important to you. Then write them in sentences and create a paragraph. Your statement does not have to be long, but it should contain what's most important to you - your philosophy of life.

For example, here is my personal mission statement:

*I am committed to my family, to lifelong learning, to encouraging others, and to being kind and thoughtful in all my encounters.*

*I am committed to taking care of myself so that I will be healthy both mentally and physically.*

*I am committed to taking care of my own responsibilities.*

*I am committed to helping others live happier, more productive lives.*

*I look to God for wisdom and guidance through life's daily challenges.*

Now write your own mission statement. When you know what you stand for, then you are ready to set your goals.
– Setting Goals –

Choosing goals that are important to you is one of the most essential things you can do in order to live your dreams.
Les Brown

This one step -- choosing a goal and sticking to it -- changes everything.
Scott Reed

Life by choice, not by chance, turns dreams into goals, and goals into achievements.
Chris Joscelyne
Getting What You Want In Life Begins With A Vision

Before you go on a vacation, you decide where you want to go and spend many hours planning and visualizing your vacation. Most of us, however, don't take time to think about what we want out of the rest of our life. Success in life is easier when you use visualization techniques to program your subconscious mind.

Follow these ten easy steps to success:

1. Make a list of all the things you might want. Then decide on thing you want the most.

2. Describe it in detail using the present tense as if you are pretending you already have it.

3. Describe the benefits of having this vision.

4. Describe how it makes you feel.

5. Draw a sketch of your desire, putting yourself in the picture. Drawing a picture is a powerful way to program it into your subconscious. It is like making a blueprint for what you would like to see in your life.

6. Put your descriptions and your sketch where you will see it every day. For example – the bathroom mirror, your refrigerator, your desk at work, or on a closet door.

7. Twice a day, just as you awake, and just before falling asleep, close your eyes and visualize your desire as if you already have it, visualizing the wonderful feelings you will have when your vision becomes reality.

8. Each week write yourself a weekly goal.

9. Reward yourself for completing each goal. Rewards are very motivating.

10. Find at least one person who will encourage you and be excited about your progress.
Set Your Goals So You Can Live Your Dreams

Before you set your goals, it’s important to evaluate your past progress. We make progress in small increments so it’s often possible to be unaware of the progress you have made during the past year. You don’t have to wait until January to start evaluating the past year to see your progress. Just look at the last twelve months determine where you are now, and where you want to be in another twelve months.

Your Evaluation Sheet

Fold a sheet of lined paper into four vertical columns. List the following six areas of your life in the left hand column leaving several lines between each one.

1. Work
2. Financial
3. Personal Health
4. Personal Happiness
5. Family
6. Community
7. Social

At the top of the next column write what date it was twelve months ago. Then write where you were in each category at the beginning of the twelve months. Write key words rather than complete sentences.

Label the next column with TODAY’S DATE and write where you are right now. This will allow you to see where you have made progress.

Finally, label the last column with the date that is twelve months from today, and list your goals.

Don’t try to write this all in one sitting. It’s better to take 15 minutes for several days to keep adding to your evaluation and your goal setting.
Create a Dream Book

Here's one way you can program your subconscious mind for success. Your subconscious mind thinks in pictures.

1. Buy an artist's sketch pad.

2. On each page draw a picture of yourself enjoying something that you want, like a new home, car, relationship, hobby, vacation, etc.

3. Write what the picture is at the bottom of each picture.

4. Draw a symbol on the page that represents the desire. For example, a heart for love, $ for money, barbells or weights for strength, a smiling face for happiness, etc.

5. Look at your sketches each night just before you go to sleep.

When you follow these five steps, you will be programming your subconscious mind to create your dreams.
Ten Goal Setting Tips to Keep You Motivated

1. Write your goal in detail.

2. Draw a picture of your goal.

3. Write the benefit of achieving this goal.

4. Close your eyes and visualize your goal every night as if you have already achieved your goal.

5. Read your goal every day. Post it where you will see it - on your refrigerator or bathroom mirror.

6. Tell someone you trust about your goal.

7. At the end of each day write down what you have done toward achieving your goal.

8. Reward yourself with a $1-$5 bill for every day you do something toward achieving your goal. Keep this money in a special place. At the end of each month spend your reward on something special.

9. Buddy up with someone who is also pursuing a goal. Call him or her once a week to share what you have accomplished.

10. SMILE - you're on your way toward achieving your dreams!
Create a Time Budget

To be successful, you must carve out the time you need to achieve your goals.

Are you overwhelmed with trying to please everyone else as you try to also get your own work accomplished? You will build your confidence by learning to set and maintain limits.

Here's the Solution.

Take a monthly calendar, and create a "time budget" that sets blocks of time for work, social, family, personal, and helping others. Then when someone asks you for help, you can look at your "time budget" and easily see whether or not you can allot the time.

If your time budget doesn't allow, simply say,

"I'm sorry, I can't help you this week, or this month, or with your project, etc."

Try to give them suggestions of other people to ask. This shows your concern, and gives them other options.

Saying "NO" will free up your time and help you focus on what is important to you. Others will respect you for setting limits, and you will increase your confidence as you make progress towards your goals.
Achieving Your Goals

How to achieve your goals and stay motivated

The best way is to work on your goals is one week at a time. That way your goals don't seem so overwhelming.

1. To start making progress, choose three easy goals. Working on more than three goals at once will spread your energy too thin.

2. Fold a page of loose leaf paper into three columns. Write the date on the top of the page. At the top of each column write a goal that you can accomplish in a week.

3. At the end of each day write what you have done toward accomplishing your three goals.

4. At the end of the week count up the total of things you have accomplished. Write that number at the top of the page.

5. Reward yourself - this is a very important step to keep you motivated. If you decide ahead of time what your reward will be, you will have something to look forward to.

6. Each week start with a new sheet of paper. You can choose some different goals or keep the same ones. Save your old pages in a loose leaf notebook.

Keep this up every week and you will create a great life!
Create an Achievement Journal

Do you remember what you were doing last month at this time? How about last year? Do the days, weeks, and months go by leaving you wondering, "What have I accomplished?" When you keep an Achievement Journal you will feel better about your progress in life. Include things you accomplish at work and in your personal life.

An Achievement Journal is not a diary where you write several pages for one day and include every detail of what happened. While a daily personal diary certainly includes accomplishments, it includes other items as well. Therefore, you may have to read through lots of details to review your accomplishments.

An “Achievement Journal is different. It is where you plan out your goals and record your day-to-day progress. You only write a few lines about each day. That way you can go back through the year and see the highlights of your progress and your accomplishments.

How to write your Achievement Journal

1. Each day write three things that you accomplished. They don’t have to be big accomplishments. You are only recording your progress.

2. At the end of each week review your Achievement Journal and reward yourself for your progress. The reward part is very important as many people feel let down when their supervisor at work or people in their family don't notice what they have done or don't show appreciation. By rewarding yourself, you are taking responsibility for creating your own momentum.

Achievement Journal entry examples
Suppose you were working on a computer project at work. Every day you would write what you accomplished such as - learned how to edit images on a Photoshop software, or completed writing three pages of an instruction manual.

(Continued on the following page. Click the next page arrow at the top.)
If you were working on improving your communication skills, you might write about a seminar you attended, a chapter of a book on assertiveness that you read, or a successful conversation with a difficult person.

Your *Achievement Journal* then becomes a record of your progress that you can use to lift your spirits when you feel you are not progressing fast enough.

Here’s another benefit of keeping an *Achievement Journal*. If you keep a record of your achievements at work, it will help remind you and your supervisor of all the wonderful things you have done for your company.

**Many people prefer a journal that they can write in for multiple years.**

*THE 5 YEAR JOURNAL* allows you to write your achievements for the same date in five different years on each page. The major benefit is that you can see at a glance what you have accomplished in five years, where you are now, and to plan where you want to go in the future.

Whether you record your achievements in a “one year at a time” journal, or in *THE 5 YEAR JOURNAL*, the important thing is to track your progress and your accomplishments in writing. Doing this will build confidence in your abilities and create the momentum that leads to success.

See information about *THE 5 YEAR JOURNAL* at [http://www.confidencecenter.com/prod09.htm](http://www.confidencecenter.com/prod09.htm)
Don't - "Try" - to Succeed

Trying doesn't work.
If you ask someone to do something and they say, "I'll try," they probably aren't going to do it. If they say, "I'll do it," you can count on them.

It is just as important to avoid the word, "try" when you are talking to yourself about your own goals. "Try" is a weak word that doesn't have any commitment associated with it.

To succeed you must talk to yourself with powerful words like, "I will do it."

Copy this reminder and put it on your bathroom mirror or on your refrigerator where you will see it every day.

BE A WINNER

If you don't ever start
You'll never succeed.

Winners don't ever quit.
Tryers" never make it.
Doers are winners!

Be a doer - not a tryer.
Do the first step now!
Create a Victory List

Your "Victory List" will give you the courage to overcome obstacles and achieve your career and personal dreams!

Take a few minutes to close your eyes and go through your life thinking of all the things you have accomplished. Start with your elementary school years and keep on going.

Small Accomplishments Count
Don't just think of the major things. Small accomplishments like learning to ride a bicycle, or being in a school play count. After reviewing your school years, go through your adult years, and think about what you have done at work and in your personal life that took effort to learn or achieve.

Now, open your eyes and write down all the things you pictured. Fill up at least one page. Add more as you think of them. As you list them you will realize that you have accomplished a lot and are very competent.

- Tape your list to your bathroom mirror.
- Read your list every day.
- Add to it every day as you accomplish more things.

Keeping a Victory List will give you the confidence to try new challenging endeavors both at work and in your personal life.
To Motivate - Celebrate

Obviously, we all like to celebrate events like birthdays, special honors, and major accomplishments. Celebrations are fun and energizing.

But... if you had something special to celebrate every week would you be...

- More enthusiastic?
- More motivated?
- More dedicated?

Well you do have something to celebrate every week – you can celebrate your progress. While most people celebrate a big success, it's even more important to celebrate the little steps of progress along the way, because:

1. You will be motivated to keep on keeping on.
2. You won’t be tempted to avoid some of the difficult or boring things you may have to do this week in order to succeed.
3. You won’t be disappointed when others don’t reward you for your efforts.

At the end of each week, decide what progress you have made that you will celebrate. Any step of progress qualifies. Don't wait until you have achieved your final goal to celebrate. You can celebrate all the steps along the way. Here are some celebration ideas:

- Put a one dollar or five dollar bill into a reward jar
- Eat dinner out with a friend
- Light a candle.
- Buy yourself a special gift.
- Have an ice cream sundae.
- Take a relaxing bubble bath.
- Read a good book
- Buy yourself a rose
- Make a champagne toast to your progress.
- Go to a concert or sporting event
- Buy yourself a bouquet of balloons.

Reward yourself each week that you make an effort toward reaching a goal. Keep a record in your Achievement Journal of how you rewarded yourself.
– Gathering Courage –

Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear.
    Ambrose Redmoon

Everyone has a talent. What is rare is the courage to nurture it in solitude and to follow the talent to where it leads.
    Erica Jong

If you could get up the courage to begin, you have the courage to succeed.
    David Viscott
Instant Inner Courage

When you have doubts, hesitation, or procrastination on reaching your goals, you need extra courage to overcome your fears. Here’s how to instantly create your own INNER COURAGE.

1. Search for a poem, saying, story, and a song that personally inspires you.

2. Write each one on a separate index card, and keep copies handy all the time - on your desk, in your purse, taped to your refrigerator, etc.

3. Whenever you need extra encouragement, read your personally chosen inspirational material or sing your song. This will turn off your negative thoughts, and give you a burst of energy and motivation.

For example, sing your song on the way to a sales call. A great song to help conquer fear is, Whistle a Happy Tune from The King and I.

When life gets difficult, read a story about someone who has overcome their difficulties. Inspirational stories can be found in the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" books.

Here’s another example where climbing a treacherous mountain required a lot of courage. Dick Bass, author of the book, "Seven Summits," wrote that he was inspired to keep moving on as he climbed to the peak of Mt. McKinley in Alaska by constantly repeating the poem IF by Rudyard Kipling. Find a poem that encourages you.

Sometimes a short quote is all you need. Remember the movie Field of Dreams where the quote was, Build it, and they will come. Motivational quotes can be found in numerous sites on the web, and every week in the Confidence Center News email newsletter.

Search for your inspirational courage material now, before you need it, so that you'll have access to instant courage when the need arises.
Get Courage by Acting - *As If*

When you don't feel comfortable or courageous about doing something, try acting "*as if*" you feel confident. Become an actor or actress playing a role. As you get better at doing the new task, you will become more comfortable in your new role as a capable, confident person.

**Tricks for acting - *As If***

1. Close your eyes and visualize yourself in your new role and succeeding in your difficult endeavor.

2. Dress the part. Wear a *costume* that is appropriate for your role.

3. Sing "*Whistle a Happy Tune*" - from the musical, *The King and I*. It will give you courage.

4. Stand or sit tall and erect while thinking of the successful person you are portraying in your role.

5. Instead of looking frightened or insecure - SMILE! You will appear more confident.

6. Pretend you are getting a standing ovation for your role.

By playing the part of an actor or actress you are leaving behind your self limiting doubts and fears. You are acting out of the inspired part of your personality.
Your Heroes Can Build Your Courage

I was awed as I watched the Olympic Torch Relay ceremonies both in Dallas, Texas and in Aspen, Colorado in its 64 day journey across the United States to Salt Lake City in 2002. I was personally inspired by the Olympic flame, and what it represents, and as I watched, I realized that the Olympics can be a inspiration and a courage builder for everyone.

The Olympic Games demonstrate how diverse people, each one with a unique talent, can come together to celebrate each other. As you watch the Olympic games and witness the incredible efforts by athletes from all over the world to compete for the “Olympic Gold,” you witness the results of focus, determination, and years of practice.

Hold Your Own Inner Olympics
You also have unique talents. Discovering them and appreciating them can build your personal confidence.

• Focus
• Determination
• Daily practice

With these essential elements you, too, can develop your skills to the utmost of your own capability. Instead of competing with the world, you can compete with yourself by striving for constant improvement. As you are inspired by the Olympic athletes, allow them to give you the courage to

"light the fire within you."

Then you, too, can feel the thrill of achievement and your own inner victory.
Create Your Own “Courage Book”

Here’s a magical way to build your courage. You can get motivated and inspired by a simple quote. Someone else’s words of wisdom and can be a very powerful encouragement. However, many times, when you need encouragement the most, you don’t have these easy motivators handy. The solution, create your own "Courage Book."

Buy a small spiral notebook that you can keep in your purse or on your desk. Whenever you read a quote, inspiring poem or a story that sparks your enthusiasm, write it in your "Courage Book." Since everyone is unique, different quotes will inspire different people. Only write the ones in your book that energize you. These become your personal courage builders. They build positive images in your mind and help you overcome your fears.

It's amazing how much wisdom is contained in short, but powerful quotes.

“Whatever you can do,
Or dream you can,
Begin it.

Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.”

Goethe

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Great works are performed, not by strength,
but by perseverance.”

Samuel Johnson

Keep your "Courage Book" with you, add to it frequently, and read it every day. Soon you will find that reading a quote, poem, or inspirational story every day keeps fear, doubt, and worry away.
To Fast Track Your Success – Get a Mentor

Having a mentor and/or a coach is one of the most valuable success tools.

None of us are born smart. We can learn the hard way from our own experiences or learn the easy way from other people's experiences. Whatever you want to learn, there are people who are already doing it who will be happy to share their secrets with you and encourage you.

A Mentor has Specific Expertise
A mentor is usually someone who can help you with a particular area of expertise – usually something technical in the business field. Most successful people received a lot of help. They know the value of learning from other people's experiences and are happy to "give back" what they received from their own mentors.

After an initial meeting you can work out an arrangement to meet on a regular basis to go over your goals, your challenges and your accomplishments in your mentor’s area of expertise.

A Coach is a Guide and Partner
A coach is a type of mentor who is trained to help you go from where you are to where you want to be in your business or in your personal life. A coach will hold regular one-on-one telephone coaching sessions with you, partnering with you to help you succeed in the direction that you want to go. You set your own goals and the time frame in which you want to achieve them.

There is nothing more motivating than having your own personal cheerleader to guide you through the rapids and keep you from banging into the boulders as you flow gently downstream toward your goals.

Which should you get – a coach? or a mentor?

It depends on what your needs are at the moment. Do you need some specific information – ask an expert to be your mentor. Do you want goal setting guidance, encouragement and feedback – get a coach. You can find out more about one-on-one coaching at www.ConfidenceCenter.com
Build Your Success Team

In addition to mentors and coaches, there are many people who could help you achieve your goals, either as sources of information or as encouragers. These people become members of your Success Team.

Many people lack the confidence to ask for the help they need or the things they want. Yet, reaching out is the only way to expand our horizons. When you ask others for help you are also giving them an opportunity to feel important and needed. It isn't necessary or even effective to try to do everything by ourselves. When we reach out to other people we are making the connections that help both the giver and receiver.

Make a List of People for Your Success Team

Make a list of the people who could either
1. Give you information to help you achieve your goals.
2. Provide you with a list of names for resources.
3. Give you ongoing emotional support and encouragement. You may want to form a group of 3-6 people who get together once a month to encourage each other.

Next to each name write what you could ask them to do to help you reach your goals.

Use Magic Words

Asking for help will be easier if you use some magic words like:

"Would you please..."

"It would mean so much to me if you would..."

"I have a problem, and I need your help with..."

With aSuccess Team you will progress much faster that you would have ever imagined.
Have the Courage to Make Mistakes

Nobody likes to make mistakes, many people avoid doing anything new or risky because they are afraid of being criticized. They are like a T-shirt I once saw that said, "Avoid criticism. Do Nothing."

However, mistakes are opportunities for you to learn and grow. Gordon Moore, the founder of the giant computer chip company, Intel, says

“If people aren't making mistakes they aren't taking enough steps to make progress.”

Because of his philosophy, he rewards his employees when they make mistakes, and they reward him with innovative ideas.

Therefore, when you make a mistake and others criticize you, consider the criticism a gift instead of a verbal beating. You now have an opportunity to decide what you can learn from the criticism and what you could do differently in the future. Try to see your mistake as one part of the situation and not the whole picture. Not everything went wrong, and you must acknowledge the positive aspects.

After you have learned all you can from your mistake, you must let it go.

So many people stop pursuing their dreams because they experience a failure along the way. Then they cause themselves additional anguish by feeling that they shouldn't have any failures. They beat themselves up with words like, "I should have known better" or "I shouldn't have done that."

However, life is a series of experiments to which we can't predict the exact results. The only way to discover a formula that works is to conduct many experiments. This means that many of the things we try in life won't work at all - but that's O.K. You can learn from those experiments and move on.

You must differentiate between taking an action that failed, and thinking of yourself as a failure. When you continue to try different experiments after experiencing a failure, then you are on the road to success. The only alternative to experiencing failure is not trying new things which leads to stagnation -- which is the only true failure.
– Implementing Your Goals –

Flaming enthusiasm, backed up by horse sense and persistence, is the quality that most frequently makes for success.

Dale Carnegie

Having once decided to achieve a certain task, achieve it at all costs of tedium and distaste. The gain in self confidence of having accomplished a tiresome labor is immense.

Thomas A. Bennett

I will persist until I succeed. Always will I take another step. If that is of no avail I will take another, and yet another. In truth, one step at a time is not too difficult. I know that small attempts, repeated, will complete any undertaking.

Og Mandino
Implement Now - Perfect Later

For most of my life I tried to be certain the results of any project would be perfect before starting it. For example, when I began skiing, I read, reread, underlined, and studied all the books on how to ski to make certain I was doing it exactly right. When I was learning to sail, I devoured the books on sailing to make sure I knew exactly what to do for every possible situation.

Trying to be perfect took the pleasure out of activities that were supposed to be fun. It was the same with anything new. As a result I didn't start many projects that might have been successful had I just began and perfected them as I went along.

Then I met a man at a National Speaker's Association convention who was wearing a T-shirt with the words, "Implement Now - Perfect Later." His philosophy was a "learn as you go" system which eliminated the enormous stress of perfectionism. “Yes, you need to have a plan," he said, “however, you can act on it – even though it isn't perfect."

The Benefits of Starting Right Now!

• You won't know how wonderful your idea is until you put it into action. Power in the “boldness of beginning” creates momentum.

• It is less overwhelming to start small and build in progressive steps.

• Don't worry about the results because you are in the experimental stage. This stage is used as a guideline for constant improvement.

• Beginning your project creates new ideas for improvement. When I began my Confidence Center newsletter, I put a lot of thought and effort into constantly trying to improve it. I would not have realized what areas needed improving if I hadn't actually started the newsletter.

• Action builds confidence. Believe in yourself, and take the steps to face and overcome the challenges that build confidence.

Remember the wisdom of the T-shirt and, “Implement Now - Perfect Later!”
Organize for Success

Are you one of those people who just attract clutter? Do you just put things in a pile to file later? Are you afraid that if something important isn't on your desk where you will see it, that you will forget about it? Have you ever tried to find something that you knew was on your desk, and now you can't find it anywhere? Would you really like to be organized, but, try as you might, you can't seem to get there? Is your clutter hampering your success?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, don't despair. There is hope. Clutter and disorganization also clutters the mind and can drive you crazy. An organized work space lowers stress and helps you think clearly and work more efficiently.

Getting organized involves changing habits, and that's not easy. It involves slowing down and doing some things that may be boring to you. In the end, you will reap the rewards of less stress, more progress toward reaching your goals, and more confidence.

Three Habits to Help You Stay Organized

1. Keep a list of the important things you need to do and where the papers are filed that relate to it. You can use a separate index card for each item on your to do list. That way you can sort the cards in the order of importance, and throw out each card as you finish the task. You could also use a computer program to keep track of your to do list and projects.

2. File it - don't pile it. When you are through with something take an extra 30 seconds and file it away. You won't forget where you put it because it will be written on your index card or in your computer.

3. Set aside a specific time each day for organizing. Choose any time of the day that works with your schedule and make that time sacred. You may want to divide the time into two sessions - for example 15 minutes after lunch and 15 minutes at the end of the day. You may need more time when you are getting started.

Spending a short time on your to do list and getting rid of clutter every day will keep you organized so you can achieve your goals.
Structure or Freedom

In order to achieve your goals, you need to have a life that is structured. You must run your life like the government runs a country. A country where everybody gets to do what they want to do, when they want to do it, does not have freedom - it has anarchy. Anarchy leads to only the strongest people having power which creates chaos and fear.

In a free society, rules and structure gives both the weak and the strong an opportunity to achieve happiness, become productive, and express their creativity within a framework that doesn't harm anyone else.

Likewise, in your personal life, you need structure and rules to have personal freedom.

1. You need routines to perform daily tasks without having to think about them every day.

2. You need to set aside a regular time to work on your goals.

3. You need to organize your "stuff" so that your things won't be in chaos.

4. You need rules for your own behavior so that you will be able to get along with others.

5. You need to set boundaries with people in your personal life who won't follow the rules.

Personal freedom begins with examining all aspects of your life. It involves doing an inventory of where you are now where you would like to be, and what changes you need to make to get there.

If you tend to your own garden, water, fertilize and weed on a regular schedule, you will actually increase your personal freedom and your chances to reap a harvest of personal success and happiness.
Prioritize

You have goals that you want to accomplish, but do the hours slip away and with your goals never getting accomplished? Or, do you do the easiest tasks first leaving the difficult ones for later? Does that “Later” time somehow never arrive? When you prioritize, you will accomplish the most important ones first.

How to Prioritize Your Goals

1. Make a list of the goals you want to accomplish.

2. Number them in order of importance instead of difficulty or time involved.

3. Take your top three goals and write each on the top of a separate paper. Under each break the goal down into small bite size mini-tasks that you can easily accomplish in a half-hour or less.

Set Aside Time

Look at your calendar, and set aside enough time during the day to do three of your mini-tasks. This is your sacred time so don't let unimportant things steal it from you. Turn off the ringer on your phone, put a do not disturb sign on your door, and inform everyone that you will be unavailable for your allotted time.

If you can, schedule the same time every day so that it becomes a habit. Soon you will accomplish more than you would have ever believed possible.
Take Three Steps Toward Your Goals Every Day

Just like the story of the turtle and the hare, doing only three things every day will get you there faster than someone who starts off like a race horse and then runs out of steam.

Choose three mini-tasks from your priority list to do every day. At the end of each day write the three things you have accomplished in your Achievement Journal or follow these directions:

• Take a lined note pad and write the month at the top of the page.
• Then divide the page into four vertical columns.
• Title the left column "Day and Date."
• Number the lines from 1 - 31.
• List your three main goals at the top of the other three columns.

Then, every night write the three things you did toward achieving your goals. If you did less than three things put an X in each blank space. At the end of the month you will have a picture of how well you are progressing toward your goals.

Instead of waiting for someone else to notice your accomplishments, you can also reward yourself each week as you complete your three things for each day.

Doing three things every day will make you feel more in control of your progress, and as you reward yourself you will have created your own self-motivation.
When Bad Habits Hinder Your Progress

As you make progress toward your goals, you may find that you have some bad habits that are slowing your progress. You want to get rid of these habits, but you aren’t having success.

It's not easy to change a habit, even if you are highly motivated. First of all, the habit is probably giving you some form of pleasure or helping you avoid something painful. How does this apply to your bad habit?

Even more powerful, your brain has formed strong synapses for the habitual behavior. This is like water that has carved a deep canyon. It's impossible to redirect the river. Don't despair, however. You can start a new river and direct it's course. Therefore, instead of trying to change an old habit, form an entirely different new habit. That way your brain will be forming new synapses that are not tied to the old habit.

Here Are Two Examples:

1. If you are trying to lose weight, don’t give up your favorite foods. Instead, form a new habit of eating a salad before each meal, with fat free dressing, of course, and a cup of steamed vegetables with each meal. These new foods will help fill your stomach and curb your appetite so you will eat less of your favorite foods and enjoy them without guilt.

2. If you have a habit of being late to wherever you have to go, start a new habit of getting there, not on time which is tied to your old habit, but at least 15 minutes early. Take along your favorite book and allow yourself to read it only when you arrive early to work or to your appointment. That will connect pleasure to your new habit.

Now try this strategy with your bad habit. Keep up your new habit for at least three weeks, and watch your bad habit gradually fade into oblivion.
Spark Your Creativity with Mind Mapping

Mind Mapping is a unique way to write down your goals and at the same time spark your creativity. Mind Mapping is a nonlinear way to organize your ideas that was developed by Tony Buzan.

The Advantages of Mind Mapping:
1. It activates the right or creative side of your brain.
2. You can see the total picture on one page.
3. You can add items whenever you think of them - Just by adding lines.
   (Unlike making a list where you don’t have space to add items whenever you think of them.)

How to Mind Map Your Ideas

1. Take a blank, unlined piece of paper. Turn it horizontal and draw a small square in the middle. In the square write your main topic or draw a picture of it. For example, write in “Birthday Party” in the square and add a small picture of a birthday cake.

2. Radiating out from the central square, like streets radiating out from the center of a town, will be your subtopics. Draw a separate line for each subtopic. Use only one or two words to describe each - (Food) (Decorations) (Invitations) (Entertainment). Make the line only as long as the word. Draw little graphics by the words whenever you can.

3. From the subtopics you can add side-streets-what you want to do in each area. For example, under food, have a separate line radiating from the word “food” for each item of food. Repeat this step for all subtopics.

Not only will Mind Mapping start your creative juices flowing, but will also organize your plan of action!

For detailed information on mind mapping, and to see graphics of mind maps go to http://www.mind-map.com
– Feeling Confident –

The first and most important step toward success is the feeling that we can succeed.
Nelson Boswell

Think positively and masterfully with confidence and faith, and life becomes more secure, more fraught with action, richer in achievement and experience.
Eddie Rickenbacker

Follow effective action with quiet reflection. From the quiet reflection will come even more effective action.
James Levin
Don't Act Like a Sheep

While on a trip to New Zealand, my husband and I visited a farm where we watched sheep being sheared. I was amazed at how docile they were. Without protesting they obediently stood still while getting their "haircut". Then they obediently laid down while the farmer was trimming their undersides.

Don't act like a sheep. You are a human being with the ability to question, analyze, and choose what direction you want your life to travel. You are entitled to make your own choices and learn from them. Making your own decisions is not easy because:

1. Some people will not be happy with your choices.

2. You won't have anyone else to blame for your mistakes.

The benefits to you will far outweigh these difficult aspects. You will feel more in control of your life and you will live a life that’s meaningful to you.

How to Make Your Own Choices

If you are used to following the crowd or being blindly obedient, begin with small steps.

1. Take 30 minutes of each weekday and at least 1 hour each weekend day to do exactly what you want.

2. Question other people's requests for your time. Instead of immediately agreeing say, "I'll think about it and get back to you tomorrow."

3. Look at the total picture of your life and notice where you need some changes. Then set some personal goals.

Making your own choices and taking the time to carry them out is the only way you will be able to develop your unique talents and build your self-confidence.
Stop Comparing Yourself to Others

On of the most damaging things to your self-confidence is the comparison game. Comparing yourself to others lowers your self esteem because it makes you think in terms of "being less than" or "being better than". If you always put people on a rung of a ladder, it creates competition and prevents you from feeling connected to people.

In addition, if you are going to compare yourself to someone in one aspect of your life, then you must compare yourself to that same person in all aspects of life - business and personal. This is an impossible task. The truth is that you can never accurately compare yourself to another since people differ in their abilities, their beliefs, and their experiences.

Compare Yourself Today to Where You Used to Be

This is the only valid comparison, and the only one that will build your confidence. You can do this by keeping an Achievement Journal. When you compare yourself today to where you were last week, last month, or last year, you can see your own progress. As you become aware of your own progress you will feel happier and more confident.
Negative Thoughts Can Lower Your Confidence

Earl Nightingale said, “You become what you think about all day.”

Positive thoughts create energy, enthusiasm and motivation, while negative thoughts create doubt and fear, damaging your confidence. Negative thoughts are so damaging because people act on their thoughts.

1. Negative thoughts about other people create fear and distrust in your relationships.
2. Negative thoughts about your abilities cause procrastination and lack of effort.
3. Negative thoughts about the future help create a negative future.

You Can Control Your Thoughts

• You can think about a hot fudge sundae with whipped cream on top.
• You can think about the time you went on a vacation to the beach.
• You can think about your favorite relative.

In each case you made your brain think about something specific.

Eliminate the Negative

You can use this same process to create positive thoughts and expectations all day long. This process will be much easier if you first eliminate as many negative influences from your life as possible. Here are some negative influences you can easily eliminate from your life.

1. Spend less time around negative people.
2. Don’t watch the news on TV.
3. Don’t read negative news in the newspaper.

Focus on the Positive

Next- fill your brain with positive information.

1. Read inspirational poems or quotes.
2. Read stories about how people have overcome challenges.
3. Listen to uplifting music

Keep in mind that positive thoughts create positive experiences and the confidence to face difficult challenges.
Your WISDOM Channel Sends *Feel Good* Messages

**The Confusing Voices in Our Head**
Do you talk to yourself. Do you argue with yourself? Do you ask yourself questions? We all have many voices in our heads that we continually ask to tell us what to do. It’s no wonder that we are often confused. I like to think of these different voices as radio channels. The question is which channel has your attention? There are two main channels in our heads.

**The Loudest Voice Within Us Is the F-E-A-R Channel.**
The FEAR channel plays loud scary music. It can’t help but get our attention. This voice overrides any other voice within us. On the FEAR channel you will find doubt, resistance, trauma, jealousy, greed, pride, and the constant rat race of everyday living.

**The Quietest Voice in Us Is the WISDOM Channel.**
This music on this channel is very soft - like a love ballad or the soft purr of a kitten. Sometimes it speaks with quiet determination. Sometimes it whispers. To hear it, you must be quiet. However, it is on this channel that you will find all the answers you need to overcome obstacles, make decisions, kindle relationships, and find true happiness.

This is because the WISDOM channel contains your intuition, your inner intelligence, and is the home of your inner coach. Tune into the WISDOM channel for a smooth ride through the bumpy roads of life, and you will find:

- Courage
- Direction
- Faith
- Gratitude
- Knowledge.

**All Animals Possess Inner Wisdom**
That’s how a spider knows how to build a web, or a bird knows how to build a nest. Our inner intelligence, however, has been drowned out by all the distractions of modern day living.

(Continued on the next page. Click the Next Page arrow at the top.)
How to Tune into Your WISDOM Channel

You can access this channel any time, even if you only have a few minutes.

• Set aside five minutes every morning and every evening.
• Turn off all outside noises, sit quietly, and close your eyes.
• Set the tone by thinking of the things you appreciate about your life.
• Then, try not to think of anything at all.

You want to leave space for thoughts to enter. Just let thoughts flow in and out of your mind.

Your Inner Coach Will Guide You

If you find yourself obsessing about a problem, ask your inner coach to give you ideas about what to do. Don’t expect instant answers, though. Your inner coach will direct you when the time is right.

Whenever you need the right words to say, or the right decision to make, turn off the FEAR channel that says, "You’ll never do it right," and tune into the home of your inner intelligence – the WISDOM Channel.
Your Uniqueness Makes You Valuable

Everyone is unique. Are you aware of how unique you are? You have something special to offer to other people, and to the world.

Here’s an exercise that will make it clear. Simply write a description about yourself for each of these 10 categories.

Put each heading on a separate sheet of paper. Then describe yourself in detail. You may need several pages in some categories.

1. Physical appearance
2. Family background and family life
3. Education
4. Hobbies and interests
5. Travel experiences
6. Community involvement
7. Social
8. Financial
9. Spiritual
10. Character qualities

After listing your unique qualities, you will see how special you are, and that you have many creative talents that you can use to make a difference at work, home and in your community.
10 Seconds to Feeling Confident

Look and feel more confident on only ten seconds. You can do this 10 second confidence booster either standing or while sitting at your desk at work.

Think of a time when you felt very confident. For example - after overcoming obstacles and accomplishing something that you didn't think you could do. For me it was learning to ski. What was it for you? This is your own courage experience. Keep your courage experience in mind while you do your 10 second confidence booster.

1. Reach your hands up as high as they can go. Then reach a little higher, and then a little higher.

2. Lower your arms sideways and hold them straight out to the side.

3. While your arms are still straight, clasp your hands together behind your back.

4. Tighten your stomach muscles.

5. Hold this position while you count slowly to 10, and smile as you think about your confident, courage experience.

Now, as you go back to what you are doing, you will feel and look more confident. Do this 10 second confidence boost several times a day, and you will feel more confident all day long.
Recreation = Re-Creation

We all know that children need to play. Children also seem to have boundless energy. Do you think that there might be some connection between the two?

Many adults have lost their ability to laugh and to play. The word recreation means to re-create.

- Are you too busy handling your responsibilities to take time to play?

- Do your recreational activities involve the stress and pressure of competition?

You can play a competitive game of golf or tennis, or, by changing the rules a little, you can play a noncompetitive game - one that's played just for "fun."

Make a List of Activities that You Consider Fun

Then look for people who share your interests. If your family or friends don't share the same enthusiasm for an activity that you love, you can join a club or organization. Meeting new people and making friends with those who share your excitement and enjoyment of an activity is very energizing.

Pick an Activity From Your “Fun List” Once a Week.

You will have something special to look forward to, and you will be taking responsibility for your own happiness. You will also radiate the energy that having fun creates.
Schedule Unplanned Time

Schedule some time every day that is totally unplanned - even if it is only 10 or 15 minutes. This is your special time to "do nothing."

Does your life seem so busy that you feel like a spinning top?

Most of us have very busy lives with more things on our to-do list than we can get done. This leaves us no time to simply relax and enjoy the moment. Unscheduled time is very important for building your confidence, because it is during this time that you can get guidance from your intuition.

Begin By Relaxing

Begin your unscheduled time each day by quietly relaxing. After a few minutes you may find yourself feeling bored, or you may feel anxious because you're not accomplishing anything. But that's O.K. If you can survive a few minutes of boredom or anxiety you won't feel the need to cram your life so full of stuff you have to do.

Write Down Intuitive Thoughts

As you relax you may get some intuitive thoughts. Keep a note pad handy to write these thoughts down. Next, you may do whatever your intuition tells you to do at the moment. It may be to take a walk, turn on some music, day dream, read a book, start a new hobby, exercise, or just relax and do nothing.

Enjoy the Moment

After your allotted time is up, you may go back to your regular daily activities. Try to expand the amount of unplanned time you allot each day. You will soon find that you are no longer a slave to constant activity, and you will feel good about spending some time relaxing and enjoying the moment.
Happiness Builds Confidence

Happy people feel and look more confident. Many people endlessly search for happiness. They feel they will find it in a new job, a new relationship, or with more money to buy things. While those things may bring us temporary excitement, soon the novelty will wear off, problems will arise, and reality will pop up and burst our bubble.

True happiness, however, doesn't depend on your job, your relationships or things you can buy. True happiness comes from a certain way of thinking.

How to Have Happy Thoughts

1. See The Silver Lining Behind Every Cloud.

   It takes courage to act happy when your life isn't perfect, but whose life is ever perfect, anyway? Just like the weather, our lives have sunny days, gray days, and stormy days. Problems and struggles are a normal part of life. Our struggles give us challenges that make life exciting and make us stronger. We can be happy during adversity if we think about the silver lining behind each difficulty.

2. Search for Something Cheerful to Talk About.

   It takes courage to act happy when everyone else is complaining about something. It may be very tempting to chime in with your own complaints. However, when you focus on what you are happy about and act happy, you will serve as a role model for others. Happiness can be catching.

3. See the Funny Side of Life's Struggles.

   People who find something humorous about their hardships are more resilient. Humor gives people the ability to accept the reality of their troubles and the energy to survive and overcome adversity.
4. Be Realistic.

When you don't expect yourself or the people in your life to be perfect, you can appreciate the things you do like about yourself and other people.

5. Remember Happy Times.

Go through your scrapbooks and photo albums, or close your eyes and go through the scrapbook in your mind remembering the times when you were very happy. Relive those moments in your mind. When you open your eyes you will be refreshed and have a brighter outlook about your life.

Happiness comes from a happy way of thinking.

Get the "Happy Habit" and you will be like a ray of sunshine on a cloudy day, warming the hearts of others with your smile and cheerful words. You will find that when you feel happy you will also feel more confident.
Smiling Creates Confidence

How you start your day sets the tone for the rest of the day. A smile is your body’s natural response when you feel happy. When you are smiling, you look and feel more confident. What’s more, remember what the classic song about smiling says, “When you’re smiling, the whole world smiles with you.”

If you start your day by doing something that makes you smile you are more likely to have a happy day. Moods can be very fragile. Be careful not to break your happy state of mind by listening to or reading the news the first thing in the morning.

Make a Smile List

For the next few days write down what you are doing every time you catch yourself smiling, such as:

- Listening to a special song
- Reading your favorite poem
- Taking your dog for a walk
- Making someone else feel good
- Talking to a friend, etc.

For example, I noticed that on my morning walk I was smiling and felt great, so I put “Take a walk” on my Smile List.

Next, start the day smiling by doing something on your list every morning. If you find yourself feeling down during the day, refer to your Smile List and take a few minutes to do something that makes you smile.
Being Totally Present in the Moment

Being totally present builds your confidence because it expands your awareness. Living in the moment allows you to absorb whatever is happening at the moment with more depth and understanding.

Try avoiding distracting thoughts of past events or fears of what might happen in the future. Avoiding these distractions takes concentration, effort, and a lot of practice.

Don’t expect to be able to do it right away. However, notice when you are being present in the moment. The more you are aware of your state of concentration, the more you will be able to focus your attention on what is happening now.

You will reap the rewards of your effort by experiencing more meaningful moments - and, after all, isn't your life really an accumulation of many, many, moments? Wouldn’t life be more memorable if you were totally present at them?
– Confidence Building Activities –

An ounce of action
is worth a ton of theory.
Friedrich Engels

The world can only be grasped
by action, not by contemplation.
The hand is the cutting edge
of the mind.
Jacob Bronowski

We should be taught not to wait for
inspiration to start a thing. Action
always generates inspiration. In-
spiration seldom generates action.
Frank Tibolt
Energize Your Life

Boredom can get us into a rut. A bored person does not feel or look confident. Boredom saps our energy and can make us depressed. Here are some easy ways you can eliminate boredom and add energy to your life.

Something as simple as changing your daily routine can give you a new outlook on life. The secret is to keep changing your patterns so that you don't get stuck.

So, if you eat after you dress in the morning, reverse it and eat first.

Exchange your usual breakfast cereal for a different breakfast every day - try pancakes, strawberry crepes, a fruit salad, etc.

If you're bored with your clothes, see what different combinations you can put together, or buy some new outfits.

Drive a different route to work each day even if it takes longer.

At work you may not be as flexible, but make little changes within the structure of your work day.

After Work Do Something Different in the Evening.

• If you’re used to watching TV, turn it off and read a book, go to a meeting, take a class in painting, tennis, or dancing.

• Instead of going to the movies, buy tickets to the theater, a concert, or a sports event.

• If you’re alone a lot, get out among people. If you’re always around people, spend some time alone getting acquainted with yourself.

You may have heard these things before, and perhaps they seem simplistic, but have you tried them?

Adding variety to life creates positive energy and builds confidence.
Build Intellectual Confidence with Crossword Puzzles

While watching the news the other day I heard a report about how people need to exercise their brains just as they need to exercise their bodies. The reporter revealed that one of the best ways to exercise your brain is to do crossword puzzles.

The Benefits of Crossword Puzzles

- They make you think
- Expand your vocabulary
- Build your intellectual confidence
- Are fun to do.

You can get started by buying a book of easy crossword puzzles and doing one every day. The easy ones only take about twenty minutes to do.

The best part of having a book of crosswords is that, if you absolutely can't figure out a word, you can look it up in the back of the book.

Doing a crossword puzzle each night before you go to bed will clear your mind from the day's problems and exercise your brain at the same time.

Doing a crossword puzzle on your lunch hour will give you something fun to do as well as stimulate your mind for the afternoon's work.

Crossword puzzles build your confidence by giving you a challenge to overcome, a sense of accomplishment, and practice in thinking more creatively.
Dance Your Way to Social Confidence

Take a class in the latest dance steps. You'll get energized as you move to the music, and you'll learn a new skill that will encourage you to have a more enjoyable social life. Learning to dance will build your social confidence. Here’s an example of an experience my husband and I had with one type of dancing.

Friends of ours who are very enthusiastic square dancers begged my husband and me to take a series of square dance lessons. I love to dance and thought it would be fun, but for my husband to go – it took some arm twisting. Only when he found out that he didn't have to make a commitment or pay till the third lesson did he reluctantly agree to "just try it."

Well, we survived the first two lessons, and when we left home to go to the third lesson my husband surprised me by saying, "Don't we need to take a check with us for the rest of the lessons?" Obviously, he was having fun.

Not only is square dancing a great way to get aerobic exercise, it's also great exercise for the mind because it makes you focus. Square dancing is also very social since you change squares and dance with other couples. Don't have a partner? No problem. They always have extra experienced dancers who are eager to fill in and be your partner.

Here are just a few of the many other types of dancing lessons.
Ballroom
Jitterbug
Latin
Country

Check out lessons for your favorite dance style. You’ll become energized and grow in confidence as you start moving to the music.

Where you can find dance classes:
• Local community colleges,
• Adult education centers
• Recreation centers
• Dance studios.
Speak Your Way to Confidence

Speaking in public is one of the best ways to raise your confidence. Since public speaking is the number one fear in our country, as you speak you will conquer some of your fears. Here are some easy ways to get started.

• **Join Toastmasters**
  You will learn how to give speeches in a supportive environment.

• **Speak to a Local Service Organization**
  Many service organizations have weekly lunch meetings and need a speaker every week.

• **Speak to a Group of Friends**
  Invite some of your friends over and speak for 10-15 minutes about a subject you feel about strongly.

• **Speak to a Group of Seniors**
  Many recreation centers and retirement homes have programs where they need speakers.

• **Speak to a Group of Young People**
  Boy scouts, girl scouts and teen organizations can benefit from your life experiences.

• **Make a presentation at work**
  Volunteer any time a presentation needs to be made at work. This is one of the best ways to be noticed by management.
Do a Good Deed

One way to increase your self-confidence is to do a good deed. In giving, you will actually receive. Notice how good you feel when you give of yourself to make someone else happy. Giving builds your confidence because:

• It creates a positive flow of energy between two people.
• You will become more aware of your own value.

Here Are a Dozen Ideas for Helping Others

1. Write a letter of encouragement to a friend.
3. Volunteer at your local school or recreation center.
4. Offer to take those who cannot drive to a doctor’s appointment, grocery store, or church.
5. Offer to take care of your neighbor's children for a few hours to give the mom sometime for herself.
6. Help serve food at a homeless shelter.
7. Bake cookies for a friend.
8. Mow your neighbor's lawn.
9. Write a letter of congratulations to someone who has done something special for you or someone else.
10. Prepare dinner for someone who is unable to get out of the house.
11. Read books to elderly people who have lost some of their vision.
12. Save your magazines and take them to nursing homes or hospitals.
Plan a Party

Planning a party helps build confidence in many ways. It helps you develop organizational skills, creativity, and follow through on a project.

It also gives you an opportunity to reach out to others, improving your relationships.

Finally, the pride you will feel in having planned your party and carried out your plans will help build your confidence.

Party Planning Steps

1. Decide what type of party
2. Make out your guest list
3. Set date, time, and place
4. Plan food
5. Plan decorations
6. Plan entertainment

Plan your time so that you will have everything done in advance. That way you will be able to relax and enjoy your party.
Do-It-Yourself

Are you used to paying someone else to do things that need to be done around your home? Before you pay someone else to do your work, take advantage of the confidence building benefits of doing it yourself.

• You learn new skills.

• You feel more capable.

• You feel less dependent.

• You feel the pride of overcoming an obstacle.

• You expand your comfort zone.

• You build your confidence.

Use your judgment. Don't attempt to fix anything dangerous such as electrical wiring. There are, however many easy jobs you can do, and many stores that supply the materials that will be happy to instruct you how to complete your project.

Ideas For Do-It-Yourself Projects

• Paint a room.

• Hang wallpaper.

• Put a new washer on a leaky faucet.

• Sew your own curtains.

• Build a piece of furniture.

• Wash and wax your car.

• Install a brick or stone patio or walkway.
Express Your Creativity

Being creative is a very easy way to build your confidence. When you have created something out of nothing it gives you an incredible feeling of excitement and satisfaction. You don’t have to be skilled or talented to create something. Start with easy things.

- Create your own recipe.
- Go to a crafts store and buy a craft kit that allows for individuality.
- Compose a song about someone you know by changing the lyrics to a popular song.
- Write a children’s story, and read it to a child.
- Sculpture something out of clay.
- Buy a sketch book, and draw pictures of your family, pet, house, favorite vacation, etc.
- Make some beaded jewelry.

When you are part of the creative process you feel much more alive and confident because you are expressing and valuing your uniqueness.
Go Someplace Alone

Most people are uncomfortable about eating alone in restaurants or going to the theater by themselves. However, when you don't have a companion, going by yourself can open new doors, and give you the opportunity to meet new people.

For example - one weekend my husband was out of town, and I noticed that the Ballet Folklorico De Mexico was going to be performed on Saturday. I had seen the ballet before and really wanted to see it again, but I couldn't find anyone to go with me.

I thought to myself, "I have two choices. I can go to the theater alone, or I can stay home." I decided to go to the theater alone.

I arrived very early to buy a ticket, and I met a lady who was taking her five year old granddaughter to the ballet. We had a delightful conversation and discovered that we both grew up in Ohio.

After I found my seat, I met another lady who was also sitting by herself. I invited her to sit in the empty seat next to mine. The show was even better than I anticipated, and I had a wonderful time - all because I was willing to "go it alone."
Be a Sport

How do you build your confidence? You must find challenges that get you out of your comfort zone and help you conquer your fears. Participating in sports activities provide the challenges necessary for confidence to grow.

• Learn to swim
• Hit a tennis ball
• Swing a golf club
• Climb a mountain or
• Conquer it skiing down

As you find a sport that you enjoy, and work on improving your skills, your confidence will also grow.

I discovered a winter vacation that is fun and exciting at the same time – Skiing. A ski vacation not only gave me the challenges that built my confidence, it did it in a winter wonderland environment. I became energized by the exercise, by the beautiful mountains, and by exciting people I met. I overcame so many fears when I learned to ski as an adult and built my confidence with this exhilarating sport.

What is your sport? If you don’t know – try several out. You need to choose your own mountain to conquer.
Writing Thank You Notes Can Build Your Confidence

Everybody knows they should write thank you notes when they receive presents, but not many people realize that writing thank you notes also builds your confidence.

Why Writing Thank You Notes Builds Your Confidence

- It makes you feel worthy - because you are acknowledging that you are important enough for someone to give you a gift.

- It makes you feel connected to the person who gave you the gift. You are giving something in return, your appreciation, to complete the connection.

- It gives you an opportunity to express how much the relationship means to you. Something some people may feel uncomfortable expressing in words.

- It gives you the power to make the gift giver feel special.

- It gives you a positive outlook as you are focusing on gratitude.

So instead of feeling like you did as a kid when your mother made you write your "Thank You Notes," look forward to writing your way to confidence.
Pamper Yourself

When you pamper yourself your confidence will grow because you have told yourself that you are worthy of being treated well. When you treat yourself well, others will notice, and they will treat you well, too.

Here's a Soothing Idea.

Take a warm bubble bath. Play some relaxing music, close your eyes and reminisce about the happy times in your life.

- Happy occasions,
- Great vacations
- Special times with friends and loved ones.

After you dry off use a soothing body lotion and then take a nap. You will wake up refreshed, reenergized and ready to take on the day.

What Could You Do to Pamper Yourself?

- Go to a park
- Read a book
- Have lunch at a special restaurant
- Buy yourself a gift
- Eat a decadent chocolate dessert

Write a list of all the things you would like to do that would make you feel pampered. Then schedule time at least once a week to pamper yourself.
– Conclusion –

Confidence grows by overcoming one fearful action at a time, by developing skills, and by creating the belief that you can learn to do the things that create your dreams.

The difficulty of creating confidence is that you have to first act without confidence in order to develop confidence.

Even if you are confident in one area of your life, when you try something new, you will lack confidence in doing that task until you practice it enough times to become proficient.

Don’t wait until you become confident to sing. Sing now, and grow your confidence – one note at a time.

The journey to confidence is lifelong, but the good news is that in pursuit of confidence you will create a life of adventure, excitement, and fulfillment. So, pack your bags, begin your journey, and hold on to your hat – it’s going to be a thriller ride.

*Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing.*

Helen Keller
– Other Confidence Resources –

Free Confidence Quiz
How confident are you? Take our free assessment. Click Here.

Free Article
The Secrets Of Self-Confidence: How to Act Confident When You Don't Feel Confident. Click Here.

101 Captivating Motivational Quotes eBook
Full Page size quotes to print out and display on walls, bulletin boards or refrigerators. These inspiring quotes will keep you motivated. Click Here.

The Leadership Path Book
Build your confidence as a leader. 12 Leadership experts share their leadership secrets. Click Here.

The 5 Year Journal
This unique journal can help you set the goals you need for success, and even more important, motivate you to follow through and create the life you have only dreamed. Build your confidence. Click Here.