

## **1. Self-Confidence For Success**

### Confidence gives direction

You feel confident. You believe there is no situation you can't handle. You attend a function with many friends or just associates present. They turn, see you, and smile. How does that make you feel? You already expect from their response to your attendance that this function will be a social success.

Alternatively, you feel self-doubt. You walk into the function and nobody smiles. You're hardly noticed. How do you feel this time? You want the function to start so that it will conclude as soon as possible. You just want to leave.

Although those examples could represent extremes at either end of your social acceptance, most people may be prepared to confess to situations often being somewhere in the middle of those boundaries. Which of those scenarios are you accustomed to? More importantly, which would you prefer?

Self-confidence is a socially attractive feature for you to possess. It is a valuable asset whether you're at work, at home or enjoying the company of friends elsewhere.

Any form of success, particularly in business or relationships, is much more easily achieved if you have a clear direction to travel in. Enhancement of your own self-belief, from confidence, assists you to see the clarity of that direction for any future successes. Indeed success and confidence must be closely connected, as it is difficult to imagine real favourable outcomes in business or relationships, without self-confidence. You are entitled to want every interaction with others to be a successful, or at least pleasant, experience.

This book will show you how to gain self-confidence. It will also show you how to maintain and enhance your own self-esteem so that you're far less likely to have fluctuations in your confidence. It will also show you how to channel that confidence to where you are

even more successful than you are now, or thought you could be. The obvious direction for success in business and relationships will then be seen to be much more transparent.

However, are you ready for the assertiveness that you are about to be given? You are being asked if you're ready because this process is, among other things, going to teach you how to maintain your self-belief. You are going to be more self-aware than you are now. Do you have any fear of how your friends and loved ones may start to treat you, or what they might say when you are a more positive and assertive person? Are you already in a comfort zone where signs of personality changes within you are a possible danger to relationships? Those are reasonable and justified concerns that need to be addressed.

Firstly, you can be assured that the process of confidence enhancement you're now beginning, will not change any of the positive aspects of your personality that make you socially attractive. All of the good qualities that your friends and loved ones acknowledge in you will still be there. If you were to make two lists of your personality traits with positive and negative characteristics in different columns, at the conclusion of any process of confidence building, all of those aspects that you identify as being positive will be maintained. Provided you're accustomed to being welcomed and smiled at when you're recognised, then you can expect that to continue. The only change could be that the welcome may be more sincere and the smiles broader. Will you mind?

Of course some of the negative traits will be gone, but is that a bad thing? Will friends and loved ones be critical because you have learnt to respect yourself, and them, more than you used to? That interchange of respect is an added benefit that you can expect from your confidence enhancement.

This informative process will teach you to be positive and assertive and at the same time it will teach you how not to be arrogant and display vanity. You will have the opportunity to share the knowledge of what you acquire without feeling the need to instruct

others on what they should learn. You will understand how to cope better with difficulties in your life and you will be encouraged to share that skill with friends and loved ones. The self-assessment that this process will encourage will not impair your personality, but it will strengthen the personality you have to the benefit of yourself and those you love, and those who love you.

How is this going to be done? It will be done by showing you where confidence originates, followed by easy, logical steps, which develop and maintain that confidence. This will lead to an enhancement of your self-belief and make you more certain about your actions and decisions. That certainty will provide ongoing reserves of self-confidence. Those steps will also make you more aware of yourself and thus lead to greater insight to your character, inhibiting self-doubt and uncertainty, so that ultimately your confidence building becomes a natural part of your ongoing self-development.

### Self-development builds character

Although self-development and self-confidence are different words with obviously different meanings, they do have a close connection. Gaining the one leads to the propagation of the other.

Self-development is the cultivation and personal growth of your character. Expansion of your inner self is not just about being self-confident. It requires that you prepare your confidence for some introspection.

You will be asked to display just the smallest amount of courage as you read, to look within your own conscience, for the motivation required for making decisions about yourself. Have you ever stood in front of the mirror, looked yourself directly in the eye, and considered your interactions with others? Try it, and see if you evoke a smile or discomfort. Can you recall an action of yours that has benefited someone else, and how that enterprise made you

feel? A more positive self-image can be expected when you recognise some personal growth in yourself, which is also displayed within your character as a result of your actions.

Attainment of personal growth provides an opportunity for celebration of your inner self. However, what you will read here is not about being self-centred or self-absorbed. Those words, similar in their application, are described in both the Macquarie and Collins dictionaries as meaning “a preoccupation with one’s own thoughts and interests, especially to the exclusion of others”. They describe people who think so much about things concerning themselves that they do not notice the needs or wants of others around them.

Self-development — an extension of self-confidence — will be shown to you in these pages as being about looking at your character from the inside and bringing out what you discover for your benefit, and for the benefit of everyone else. You will see that you can have self-esteem without selfishness, that you can be self-assured without narcissism, and that you can display self-confidence without displaying arrogance.

To follow this process will provide you with a specific critical step on your way to self-confidence that will actually prevent arrogance from developing.

There’s no physical discomfort, and there’s no emotional discomfort. The only requirement is an acceptance and appreciation of things that you may find you already knew and had forgotten or had not often considered. You may have never had any doubts about the advantages to you of liking yourself and of being confident. However, you may not have often considered what you should do to actually gain and maintain that confidence, or even if it was feasible.

#### A universal message of confidence

For instance, if you were to think about where your confidence will come from, what is your initial belief? Do you believe that your ethnic origins, your religion, your work status

or financial position, will give you confidence? All of those areas can be used to support confidence, but they are also subject to change. You cannot alter your genes that provide your ethnicity but you can change your nationality and allegiances by moving to another country and adopting their citizenship. Your religion, work status and finances can alter dramatically by your choices or by the actions of others. How would you expect your confidence to be affected by those changes in circumstance?

This process will show why those changes should not matter. Your own character and conscience will generate your confidence from within. Why should it be any other way? If you have ever travelled across the world you would see that the vast majority of people don't have work or financial status. There are billions of people who have different religious beliefs to you. Do they all lack confidence? Can you recall visiting people who were genuinely poor, who had no prospects of improving their financial or work status? You might expect that they would still spread out a meal and confidently provide genuine affection and respect. Even if they're fulfilling cultural expectations, their confidence as hosts can only come from the same place as yours: from within.

What about previous or current relationships? Do you see your upbringing or the people you work or socialise with as determining your levels of confidence? As a child, if you fell and cut an arm or a leg, did someone kiss it better and provide comfort for your pain? Although it is rare, you may not have been comforted when injured as a child: you may have had a Spartan upbringing and been told to put up with the pain. But though it is possible to use previous positive relationships to support confidence, you would have had very little say in how you were initially raised. Similarly, it could be that many of your current interactions with others are not supportive or of your choosing.

When you first started your current employment did everyone smile and welcome you to the job? Was that initial warmth maintained or did others see you as a threat to the status

quo and did they become less friendly? You may have very little influence over whom you work with or the friends of your friends whom you socialise with. You still have to get out of bed, get dressed and go to work, school or gatherings to fulfil financial, educational and social obligations.

Even if you're unemployed, with few friends and unhappy relationships, you must face yourself and the world, and start again every day. If relationships at home or work aren't positive why would you want to allow them to affect your confidence? That's why your confidence must be yours alone and be developed from within.

### The secret of life is to live it

The process leading to greater self-awareness that is shown here will attempt to go directly to the point of the title and expedite the simple rationale of this book's message. That message is that life is for living. If you have chosen to live with high self-esteem, from confidence, then you are entitled to have that expectation fulfilled.

Therefore it is important to understand not only what self-confidence is, but also where your self-belief, because of that confidence, will come from. That way you can better understand how to nurture it, and how to share your advanced self-esteem with your loved ones and the wider community. The better you understand the origins and the development of your growth in self-assurance the better you can use it to appreciate your distinctiveness, which will ultimately determine the character you display, and how the rest of the world recognises and treats you.

Consequently the most important assignment of this book will be to provide the clarity for you to appreciate, to be convinced, that there can be no ongoing, unflinching reserves of self-confidence, without self-awareness and character development. This process will provide that transparency, simply enough to make those conclusions obvious.

## The five critical steps

Throughout this process you will be shown that there are many supportive ways to advance and reinforce your confidence. However, part of the already stated objective is the promise of the keys to obtain and then be able to use self-confidence as an ongoing benefit. That ongoing commitment will consist of five significant phases which are:

1. Recognition and embracing of your uniqueness
2. Celebration of achievements
3. Writing your own Vision Statement
4. Goal setting, and
5. Application.

As you progress to each of those five areas you will be shown both the reason for their importance and also how they link together and are integral to the success of all of the other vital stages as well. You will learn that although each of the crucial steps, on their own, may realise and support that desired objective to provide the confidence that will enhance your self-esteem, each juncture, more importantly, will be fundamental in its support of each and all of the other critical steps.

Therefore even if you immediately grasp the independent working value of each decisive point, it is probable that you will only properly appreciate the total process of personal growth they will provide, after you have come to understand how those five all-important phases work collectively.

That is why you must be cautioned against believing your confidence can be maintained simply by an understanding of the individual nature of those steps. Their unified value is what provides the compound nature of this decisive process.

## Summary

- a) Self-confidence is a socially attractive feature that assists to ensure success in business and relationships.
- b) Your personality will not be altered in a negative way because of any reinforcement of your self-esteem.
- c) You will be shown, with certainty, that to ensure ongoing reserves of self-confidence, you need enhanced self-awareness and character development.
- d) There is a commitment to provide you with a specific stage towards gaining self-confidence that prevents arrogance.
- e) This process is universal and will be effective irrespective of your background and experiences.
- f) The combination of all the critical steps is what will provide the ongoing reserves of self-confidence.

Before going into detail on the workings of the five separate phases the next chapter will explain the close connection between self-confidence and achievement.