

15. Conclusions

Business application

Although the focus of what has been shown in these pages was on the individual, you will find there is a lot of scope for the lessons here to be applied to business situations as well. Often the survival of a company could be determined by how well a business can deal with stress and surprise. The only way a Chief Executive Officer or business owner can be certain of survival is to have working for them the employees who handle stress best.

Self-confidence allows individual employees to understand themselves better and to deal better with stress in their own lives and changes in their employer's business. Therefore those that will handle stresses and changes best in their employment, and who will be of greatest benefit to the company, will be the ones with the greatest self-awareness skills, who have the ability to handle stress and surprise in their own personal lives first.

All companies and businesses should be encouraging their employees to develop these skills for ongoing self-confidence. Not only does that ensure your staff, managers and executives can handle change within the company, it also ensures they will be assertive in their employment without the risk of the arrogance that can cause discontent or disputes. It is discontent and disputes that can result in stoppages of work or some of your best leaders seeking employment elsewhere.

Reaching the objectives

This program's objective was to teach you the complete way to achieve, advance and maintain the advancement of your own self-confidence. It is expected that you can now feel comfortable with the accomplishment of that objective.

You were encouraged to believe that there could be no lasting self-confidence without the self-awareness that is promoted by the critical steps. You should now see that belief to

have merit. You have needed to make some decisions about yourself. Having sought out and accepted that introspection, the results mean that you will have ongoing reserves of self-belief.

The theory was also presented that you cannot have inexhaustible reserves of self-confidence, without the character development provided for within this program. That strength of character has also been delivered — you have delivered it to yourself. You have bonded yourself intrinsically to the *Cycle of Confidence* by utilising the five critical steps.

The examples of the dangers of living without a process of character development were taken from the military because of the scrutiny of effective outcomes to which military leaders are subjected. Supposing the same process of scrutiny was provided for captains of industry? You could expect similar results. How many Chief Executive Officers could be found to have made arrogant decisions that have resulted in great corporate losses?

You have been provided with a set of five critical steps, which are both easy and logical. Rather than take someone else's journey, inspired by their experiences, you have been shown the beauty and purity of taking your own journey on the path to enhanced self-esteem. You've seen that people's journeys are as unique as they are.

Even at this early stage you will see that by utilising the five critical steps, you already understand the credibility of this as the only complete path to confidence development.

Never accept anything less than the appreciation of your own originality, and demand and expect the best your world has to offer, because of that remarkable person within, whom you now willingly and eagerly accept and trust as a friend.

It's a funny thing about life; if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it.

W. Somerset Maugham (1874-1965)

You will find that this process of self-belief will have raised your expectations of yourself and others so you should envisage better results from most decisions and actions of your life. The result of getting what you expect is yet another example of the self-fulfilling prophecy in action.

The utilisation of this practice has reinforced your knowledge of the fact that you are responsible for the choices you make every day. By using the character ethic of your originality, you can make the choices that will change and enhance your life.

You can choose your future

Because of the significance of the principles you identified within your character, you will make more responsible choices. You also know that choices made by others can affect your life as well. It is because you are able to respond in any way, good or bad, you can use those indelible principles to make ethical choices.

You will respond to disappointments and circumstances with a new strength of integrity that will be recognised by yourself and others.

Expect support from associates and loved ones. It will always be in their interest, as well as yours, to nurture your growth in self-awareness, and thus in self-trust. You will also now appreciate that because it is not always that easy to start with, it is necessary to make small and attainable, the steps along the path to confidence and firmness of character.

You have seen how to use your Vision Statement as a guide to the goals which represent your action plans for your future. There were explanations given of the difference between leadership and management and how your Vision Statement provided the guidance for the aspirations that will manage your future successes.

Action without rushing

Remember that the setting of goals can only take place when you have enough reliance in the depth and substance of your Vision Statement, and when you can feel that certainty within yourself that your Statement should be generating. Be prepared to carry that Vision Statement with you and refer to it, review it and adjust it as required. That is why it was explained that you need to move one small step at a time, to ensure that the path to your character development does not feel too difficult. You must understand that the results may be immediate, or may take a couple of weeks, depending on how depleted your levels of self-belief have become by life.

Be patient, because your first responsibility to your inner self will never change.

Your Vision Statement will require you to communicate more carefully than you once may have. Both yourself and others are going to notice the difference in your interest level towards others, and in your desire to be aware of them, because in return you will want to be better understood by them.

Although your Vision Statement has received a lot of attention here, and has enormous significance, it is not the most important phase. Perhaps, because of its tangible qualities, it can be accepted as the most active component of the five stages. It is however just one phase of a complete process. If you were to seek out for yourself one of the steps as being more significant than the others are, please respect the first step — the recognition and embracing of your own uniqueness — as having that pivotal importance. That is what you must know and teach to others. You may not feel comfortable to celebrate your achievements, you may find it is difficult to adhere to your Vision Statement, and you may find that goal setting doesn't always succeed, unless you have accepted that remarkable and unique person that you are. Once that is acknowledged, you will, by virtue of the fifth critical step of application,

display that distinctiveness to everyone else, and you have seen that to be something that all others are waiting to share with you.

You can manage the tough times

The person you now portray is more assertive, trusted and certain of the decisions and choices you're making. Of course being positive doesn't mean that you will always be happy. Certainty leads to further accomplishment, not always happiness. Confidence provides you with the strength to accept unhappiness if it comes your way. A positive self-image is the buffer between unhappiness and peace of mind. The process of character building that this process has taught you will not necessarily stop you from moments of unhappiness or from making mistakes. However, by following the critical steps laid out here, you will make fewer mistakes, you will cope much better with moments of disappointment and unhappiness, and you will be far less likely to fail in your endeavours.

Through all those disconcerting times, you will now be able to push on because the critical steps to self-confidence provide you with the incentive to accept, and better deal with, those set backs in life that are going to be inevitable. Assuming that at some time in your life you are faced with daunting setbacks you will at least have this book at hand to assist you to appreciate your own inner strength which will guide you to overcome those setbacks.

If you have followed the five critical steps faithfully, that should give you the ability to manage yourself without further reinforcement. That is what Living With Self-Confidence was designed to provide. The possession and growth of your confidence and achievements becomes intuitive, as displayed in the *Cycle of confidence*, without the need for external influences. You may expect that your new, immovable conviction will lead you to success in many other areas of your life.

Achievements in other areas of your life are most probable; however, if you are seeking victories in anything, remember that you can't actually go and get success. You can only use the best of your skills, exercised patiently, relentlessly, with dedication, to achieve a desired result. It is then that success will come to you, not the other way around. The five critical steps to self-belief within this program should have taught you how to maintain the strength to expect favourable outcomes much more often.

Mortality reigns

Of course, as valuable as this process is, its power is more advantageous while you're still young enough to fully utilise it. You are not immortal and eventually illness, and possibly some regrets, will permeate your consciousness. Are there still friends within, as well as outside, your family who will put their arms around you and remind you of your importance to them, yourself and to the rest of the world when you're feeling vulnerable? The frustration of retirement — perhaps forced — and the loss of some of those you loved must be faced along the way. No one can make that easy for you, as physical and emotional pain are very private and often need to be endured stoically to avoid hurting those close to you who detect your discomfort.

However, as you have commenced this process you are now aware of how much better you can prepare to endure those obstacles.

How others remember you may not be important to contemplate right now but you will be remembered. Even if, because of circumstances, the number of people that recall your significance is small, you still have every right to be remembered for your uniqueness. Your actions today and your future activities can still determine your legacy. You're still entitled to make moral judgements, and write or dictate your views, so that they become available to the less experienced and less enlightened.

For instance, do you see employment for everyone as a right or a responsibility? Do you see the saving of animal and plant life as a matter of priority or as a hindrance to progress? Is euthanasia a right or a crime? Are refugees a matter of security or humanity? If your family is grown, or gone, you still have a wealth of knowledge and views to express that the rest of the world needs. Your experience, because of your originality, is still required. You can use the leadership expressed within your Vision Statement to make those views known. Politicians, editors, journalists, the media, community groups and charities are almost begging to hear from you. And if they're not, tell them anyway as your experience, longevity and uniqueness has earned you the right. Please do it for their sake as well as yours.

Use all the tools

There were many tools provided as you followed this process that can be used to enhance the confidence required for maintaining high levels of self-belief. However, you will also understand that, significant as any or all of those tools can be as forms of support, they are not imperative. Even without the valuable tools of exercise, education, social interaction, meditation or religion, it is the five critical steps that remain essential for the personal success of the search for confidence from within yourself.

Naturally, none of those other tools of support that you have access to should be ignored, as they will all serve to enhance a level of self-assurance that can only encourage you to better understand and utilise the five critical steps to Living With Self-Confidence.

This process was designed to not only provide you with the steps to self-confidence but also to provide guidelines that would overcome the obstacles to confidence. Those barriers of self-doubt, guilt, uncertainty, conflict of conscience and arrogance will be controlled by the strength of character you have given yourself through this process. If you have given much thought as to why your own levels of confidence fluctuate, you will have reached the conclusion that the critical steps are going to moderate that inconsistency.

Indeed now that you are aware of the simplicity and purity of those guidelines you may find life is uncomfortable to live without them.

Having achieved those guidelines to alleviate fluctuations in confidence, you should as part of the fifth critical step, be applying that knowledge in practice. Part of the application of that practice is to share your knowledge. You should be teaching others what you know, and you should be showing them what this process consists of so that they can plan their own journey of self-examination. You now have the guidelines not only to live well, but also to live a fair and tolerant life, guided by the strength and purity of your own character.

Living well and beautifully and justly are all one thing.

Socrates (496BC-399BC)

Always permit the strength and purity from within to provide you with guidance. Your principles that form the basis of a chain of reasoning, reflecting inherent truth, will competently manage your future actions and decisions. They will never let you down.

All of those essential principles are intertwined to create persons easily recognised, trusted and admired for the quality of their character. You are, or most certainly soon will be, acknowledged as one of them.

You now have the complete knowledge for ongoing reserves, and the maintaining, of self-confidence. It is one of the most important secrets of life. Now that you have it, go and live it.

This book will end with a quotation. It is a quotation provided by one of the world's great playwrights who was able to display within his writings an astute knowledge of the

fundamental nature of self-belief, from confidence, that leads to the cultivation of character development. Truth to oneself is a major theme of William Shakespeare's (1564-1616) play Hamlet, and these words from it are often quoted. They are the more telling because, ironically, they are used by a character — Polonius — who fails every test of integrity, and pays the ultimate price for a life of intrigue and spying.

This above all: to thine own self be true,

And it must follow, as the night the day,

Thou canst not then be false to any man.

(Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 3, lines 78-80.)

THE END.