

## **2. Achievement Breeds Self-Confidence**

### What is self-confidence?

Self-confidence is the mental attitude of having trust in, respect for and reliance on, your own judgement. You decide to wear particular clothes to start your day. You value the advice from others who indicate that you would look better wearing something else. However you dress yourself in your choice, feeling certain that you're right. You have just displayed self-confidence. The intrinsic feature of self-confidence is ensuring that you're comfortable with yourself — the person that you are. Making your own decisions, after listening to helpful advice, reflects that comfort.

Self-belief, developed from confidence, is the conviction that you can achieve almost anything. Having a positive self-image, attained from confidence, assists you to look forward to challenges. Self-assurance is another feature of confidence, as is self-reliance. They encourage achievement and independence. Self-confidence drives athletes to greater commitment and it supports the desire of people to succeed in business, politics and social interaction. Self-respect, from confidence, can be used to display a greater strength in your own character.

Of course it is one thing to be told that you only need a good self-image to succeed in life, but how do you actually obtain such an intangible object that everyone talks and writes about? How do you learn to think, act and be positive?

It is difficult or even impossible to gain the confidence that leads to self-respect just because you're told that's what you need. What a wonderful world it would be if it were that easy. Due to its intangible nature you can't pick it up, hold it or nurture it, or show this valuable asset to others, or lock it away for safe keeping. You can display some self-trust in your manner and with your words, so that you and others can detect it within your character,

but you can't hold it up and wave it like a flag. If you could reach into a pocket and withdraw some reflection of your character as a tangible product, you would find your confidence much easier to maintain.

The first three critical steps to your self-confidence are going to greatly assist you to see and appreciate the real value of your character. That will strengthen your self-belief. However it is also important to understand the need to accept self-belief from whatever source makes it available.

One of the most important sources of self-confidence that will be looked at here is achievement. Recall a time in your life when you felt enormous satisfaction with yourself because of some achievement? Take for instance the passing of your driver's licence test. Did you apply for, and obtain, a licence as soon as you reached the qualifying age? How good did that make you feel? Is that a feeling you would want to carry with you every day? Stand outside the appropriate licensing office in any country and you will observe the ear-to-ear smiles on everyone who passes the test. Their happiness is reflective of self-satisfaction because of their personal achievement.

Achievements generate self-assurance just as true accomplishment will come from a sense of completeness and conviction in yourself. They feed off each other. Fulfilment and self-esteem, from confidence, are amongst the greatest sources of your happiness as you go through life.

#### Achievement and Self-Confidence – which comes first?

If achievement and self-confidence appear to be feeding off each other, which one comes first, and is that knowledge important? What makes babies rise from a crawling position to grab onto the lounge and pull themselves up onto their cute little feet for the first time? Once they're up there, tottering on the brink of failure and their little arms and legs

wobble to a stop, they turn their beautiful faces to you and smile a beam of accomplishment. That is a smile of triumph because they have gained some independence.

They may not remember this moment, Mum and Dad, but look out; your troubles are just beginning, because they can now go where they like, and grab anything that they want. A new world of opportunities to shove things into their mouths has arrived, and of course you want to preserve that.

That moment is what you live for. It feeds and nourishes your own expectations of happiness for your child's future as you identify with the purity of such a moment. That smile of self-belief, resulting from their performance, is what you hope to see on your children's faces every day of their glorious lives.

The instinctive nature of achievement will be made clearer in *Chapter Five*. The Collins English Dictionary describes *instinct* as an “inborn impulse or intuitive power, an unconscious skill, talent or urge”. It is reasonable to accept from that definition that it was instinct that drove your baby to achieve the skill to stand up. However, the turn of the head and the smile, that was the first teaspoon of self-reliance that you recognised, being stirred into a lifetime of completion and happiness. Using that example, it would not be unreasonable for you to conclude that intuitive achievement comes first, followed closely by self-confidence.

#### Each one supports the other

Therefore it can be said that gaining self-confidence through exploits is feeling good about the completion of something you had attempted. You're aware of the wonderful effect that it can have on your life, when self-belief is contributing to the very essence and purity of your inner self. It is encouraging to feel positive about the successful completion of something you had attempted.

As self-confidence encourages and compliments your accomplishments, no matter how small and no matter how insignificant they may seem, every one of your completed deeds will in turn contribute to your positive self-image. That is a good enough reason to extol any and all of your successes. Whatever can be used to support and reinforce your self-belief should be grasped tightly and utilised regularly.

Just as with the first time you stood up, and whenever you acknowledge any thought or exploit of your own, you are contributing to your self-assurance.

On every occasion that you feel good about an achievement, it is an occasion for praise. The sixth chapter will reinforce the point that every time you honour a victory and share that acclamation with others, you are adding to their pleasure and to your own improved self-image.

Some of your accomplishments will have passed from your conscious mind, such as your first steps or words, but your unconscious mind will not have forgotten. The skill of walking and talking are skills you attempted and attained, so they are triumphs that at some time provided for an enhancement of your supply of self-belief. Since establishing that instinctive achievements are the catalyst for your growth in self-confidence, the real issue that remains is the need and the ability to be able to utilise that knowledge constructively.

### Learning about Self-Confidence and achievement

In order to be able to utilise the self-assurance that leads to further triumphs, it is important to find the source of those intangible qualities so that they become easier to harness for your own benefit. There are many studies that explain self-reliance to produce exploits as being a natural element of your personality, which only needs to be fed to ensure success. How many times have you heard that you only need to take control? You could be told that you only need to think positive. Such advice tells you to develop an ability to solve problems,

to learn to like yourself. You will be happier when you learn to take responsibility and act positively, they assert, and have greater self-trust, when you learn to live purposefully and consciously. These are important assertions because they're partly right.

However what value do you think those words would have for the downtrodden, the unemployed or those with low self-esteem?

It's important to be clear what this process is teaching. There are a lot of self-help tips available that can be seen and sometimes proved to have had some value, even if the emotional support they provide is temporary. But if they are not going to provide you with the formula for attainment of self-reliance, and then show you how to nurture and maintain its effectiveness, they will often turn out, after some initial motivation, to be empty promises. It is important to find the best, simplest and most durable way to package all the self-help ideas together so that they work to ensure that they are permanent, and not just empty promises.

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*The promises of this world are for the most part vain phantoms, and to confide in one's self, and become something of worth and value, is the best and safest course.*

Michelangelo (1475-1564)

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Finding, exposing and developing the initial source of your confidence is guaranteed to show you the best and safest course for the attainment, maintenance and further positive development of your self-image.

### Summary

- a) Self-confidence is about feeling comfortable with yourself.
- b) Any form of achievement is going to support your self-belief.

- c) Achievement that creates self-confidence is initially an instinctive action.
- d) It is important to find the source of the instinctive action leading to achievement and self-confidence so that they may be nurtured collectively.
- e) All self-help tips may have some value, even if their support is temporary.

Other studies that concentrate on the philosophies of life explain the four important segments of your existence that go to make your life complete. Their agenda is to teach you about the physical, mental, social and spiritual dimensions of your lives.

In the next chapter of this activity you will see not only what brings about the commencement of self-assurance and accomplishment, but also how the four dimensions of your existence work together in contributing to the fulfilment of your lives expectations. Furthermore it will be within one of those dimensions that you will find the true foundations for your intuitive achievements and thus for your self-confidence.