

Does this sound like you?

- You criticize yourself for your mistakes
- You feel you're no good, or you have lost your confidence
- You feel like nothing good can happen to you
- You call yourself names and put yourself down
- You are lonely and have a difficult time making friends
- You lack self-confidence
- Your feelings are easily hurt
- You have a hard time changing and dislike new experiences

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself. It affects the choices you make and your relationships with others. Self-esteem can be poor or healthy. Your self-esteem is healthy if you think mostly good things about yourself. Your self-esteem is poor if you put yourself down a lot.

Healthy self-esteem can help you achieve your goals and can contribute to good relationships with others. It can give you self-confidence. Poor self-esteem can make it difficult to get things done, make you question your abilities, and can even contribute to depression.

How is self-esteem formed?

Self-esteem is based on who you are and the relationships and experiences you have had at home, in school, with friends, and in the community. You form an image of yourself based on these experiences and relationships. Positive experiences and relationships contribute to healthy self-esteem, and negative experiences and relationships contribute to poor self-esteem.

What are the consequences of poor self-esteem?

- Anxiety, stress, loneliness, and depression
- Problems in relationships
- Poor academic and job performance
- Underachievement
- Increased chance of alcohol or drug abuse

Can self-esteem be improved?

It is not easy to change your self-esteem, but there are some things you can do.

- Congratulate yourself for your successes
- Accept and be proud of who you are despite your weaknesses
- Take the time to get to know and respect yourself
- Develop goals for change that you can realistically achieve

Can a counselor help me?

Talking to a counselor helps many people with poor self-esteem. A counselor can help you make positive changes in your life and help you feel better about yourself.