

CONFIDENCE?



This may help...

CONFIDENCE

Foreword

In producing this confidence book we are extremely grateful to the following people who gave their time, thoughts and ideas without hesitation, to create something that we believed in.

Many thanks to Sydney Carter, Heather Cross, Adrian Ridley, Anne Fuller and Liessa Mallinson whose inspiration helped create this useful tool to assist those who may need a helping hand in building their confidence.

A great deal of thought, time and energy was given to create this and we hope that some, if not all of its content, will assist you as you reach your goal. Whatever you have gone through, or wherever you would like to go, we hope that this book will give you the strength to achieve. We wish you well.

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Introduction

Within this book you will find useful information, exercises, ideas, and lots more. There are lots of ideas to work on. Take one step at a time and work on something that is manageable – you choose. Decide whether you want to work on your own, or whether you would prefer the help of a loved one or friend? Perhaps you know someone who would also like to build their confidence; you may find it easier to work together to reach your individual goals.

Remember that it is ok to take small steps, try an exercise and if its too hard just now, try a different one, or just read through some of the tips. Consider creating an acronym for yourself, like the examples in the book. They are fun and you can use any word. Choose one that makes you feel positive, even a pet name or something you like. Make it fun, and soon you will start to see a difference and that's great! You can reach your goal, you can do this, just take one step at a time..... good luck!!!

Remember there is no set way to work through this book, just do what feels comfortable.

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Pick from the following the qualities you feel represent "Confidence"

Is Confidence ...?

Belief in yourself and your abilities.

Freedom from doubt.

Having trust in yourself.

Having faith in yourself,
being certain of something.

The ability to ask for what you want.

The ability to say no.

Expressing your emotions.

Communicating effectively.

The ability to compromise.

Being independent.

Being aggressive to get your way.

Hiding your feelings.

Not caring about anyone else
/ being rude to others.

Being selfish.

10 Common Irrational Beliefs

Albert Ellis and his colleagues identified ten common irrational beliefs which, if held too rigidly, are likely to lead to emotional distress.

1. I must be liked or accepted by every important person in my life, for almost everything I do.
2. I must be successful, competent and achieving in everything I do if I am to consider myself worthwhile.
3. It is awful and terrible when things are not the way I would like them to be. Things should be different.
4. I must feel anxious, upset and pre-occupied if something is, or may be, dangerous.
5. Human unhappiness is caused by events beyond our control so people have little or no ability to control their negative feelings.
6. It is easier to avoid facing many of life's difficulties and responsibilities than to face them.
7. The past is all-important, so if something once strongly affected one's life, it cannot be altered.
8. When people act badly, inadequately or unfairly, I blame them and view them as completely bad or pathetic – including myself.
9. Maximum happiness can be achieved by inertia and inaction, or by passively enjoying oneself.
10. Everyone should be dependent on others and I need someone stronger than myself on whom I can rely.

(adapted from Ellis & Harper, 1975)

Talking Yourself into Being Assertive

At times we can all become prone to negative, irrational thinking which causes a block to assertive behaviour. We need to identify these negative thoughts, or obstacles, and then to challenge them. Are they based on irrational beliefs?

Examine the following list, and note which of the thoughts and styles of faulty thinking you are most prone to:

1. It is uncaring, rude and selfish to say what I want.
2. If I assert myself I will upset the other person and ruin our relationship.
3. It will be terribly embarrassing if I say what I think.
4. If someone says 'no' to my request it is because they don't like or love me.
5. I shouldn't have to say what I need or how I feel; people close to me should already know.
6. I have no right to change my mind; neither has anybody else.
7. I don't really mind the present situation.
8. It will all work out in the end, and anyway, it's not my fault.
9. People should keep their feelings to themselves.
10. I shouldn't say how I'm really feeling or thinking because I don't want to burden others with my problems.

Add any other negative thoughts you can think of:

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Identifying Situations to Work on

Everyday situations that may require assertiveness:

At work

How do you respond when:

1. You receive a compliment on your appearance, or someone praises your work?
2. You are criticized unfairly?
3. You are criticized legitimately by a superior?
4. Your boss makes a sexual innuendo or makes a pass at you?
5. You have to confront a subordinate for continual lateness or sloppy work?



At home

How do you respond when:

1. One of your parents criticizes you?
2. You are irritated by a persistent habit in someone you love?
3. Everybody leaves the washing-up to you?
4. You want to say 'no' to a proposed visit to a relative?
5. Your partner feels amorous but you are not in the mood?



In public

How do you respond when:

1. In a restaurant the food you ordered arrives cold or overcooked?
2. A fellow passenger in a non-smoking compartment lights a cigarette?
3. You are faced with an unhelpful shop assistant?
4. Somebody barges in front of you in a queue?
5. You take an inferior article back to shop?



Amongst friends

How do you respond when:

1. You feel angry with the way a friend has treated you?
2. A friend makes what you consider to be an unreasonable request?
3. You want to ask a friend for a favour?
4. You ask a friend for repayment of a loan of money?
5. You have to negotiate with a friend on which film to see or where to meet?



Challenge your Negative Thoughts

If you have any of the negative thoughts listed below read the corresponding challenge and work on changing your thinking to this.

NEGATIVE THOUGHT

CHALLENGE

I can't stand it.

I can stand it. It's difficult but I can put up with it. It is good for me.

I am just not good enough.

I am not perfect. Like everybody I am good at some things and not so good at others.

What is the point trying?

If I don't try, I won't know. Trying in itself will broaden my experience and skill. Nobody is expecting me to do it perfectly.

What if I make a mistake – it would be awful.

Everybody makes mistakes. It is good to make mistakes because that is the best way to learn.

I have nothing to say – I'm boring.

I have opinions, thoughts and feelings. I like reading and going out. Perhaps I need to improve my ability to express myself. I can practice.

If people really knew me they wouldn't like me.

There are things about me that are likeable and things that are unlikeable – just like everybody else.

Nobody likes me.

There are people who like me. I have had better relationships in the past and will in the future.

Everybody else has a better time than I do – they're all happy.

I don't know this for a fact. Just because they seem busier doesn't mean they are more satisfied.

It would be best if I stayed away because I'm no good at relationships.

If I stay away I don't give myself a chance. I'll probably be all right if I can just relax.

I might break down emotionally in front of people and feel ridiculous.

I have a good reason to be upset. People are a lot more understanding than I think. It would not be the end of the world. What is wrong with showing emotion?

I'm hopeless at everything. I'll never sort myself out like this.

Just take one step at a time. Totally condemning myself is nonsense. I've overcome more difficult problems than this.

Assertiveness Skills

Be specific

Decide what it is you want or feel and say so specifically or directly. This skill will help you to be clear about what exactly it is you want to communicate. Avoid unnecessary padding and keep your statement simple and brief.

Repeat (broken record technique)

This skill involves preparing what you are going to say and repeating it exactly, as often as necessary, in a calm relaxed manner. It helps you to stick to your statement or request without being distracted. Using this technique, you can relax because you know what you are going to say and you can maintain a steady comment, avoiding irrelevant logic or argumentative bait.

Compromise

This is important to remember when there is a conflict between your needs or wishes and those of someone else. Assertiveness is not about winning, so you need to negotiate from an equal position. This means finding a true compromise which takes both parties' needs into consideration. Compromising on a solution to a difficult situation need not compromise your self-respect.

Self-disclosure

This skill allows you to disclose your feeling with a simple statement, for example, "I feel nervous" or "I feel guilty". The immediate effect is to reduce your anxiety, enabling you to relax and take charge of yourself and your feelings.

Negative assertion

This skill involves calmly agreeing with someone else's true criticism of your negative qualities and accepting that you have faults e.g. "Your desk is a complete and utter tip. You are very disorganised." "Yes it's true, I'm not very tidy". The key to using negative assertion is, of course, self-confidence and a belief that you have the ability to change yourself if you so wish. By agreeing with and accepting criticism, if it is appropriate, you need not feel totally demolished.

Negative inquiry

This skill involves actively prompting criticism of your behaviour, to ascertain whether the criticism is constructive, or to expose it as manipulative and hurtful. For example, "You'll find that difficult won't you, because you are so shy?" You reply, "In what ways do you think I'm shy?" If the criticism is constructive, that information can be used constructively and the general channel of communication will be improved.

I have the right to:

**have opinions, feelings and emotions,
and the right to express them appropriately**

change my mind

change myself and be an assertive person

protest against unfair treatment or criticism

**ask for what I want, realising that the other person
has the right to say no**

choose whether or not to get involved with someone else's problems

put myself first sometimes

be successful

say I don't understand

make statements with no logical basis, which I don't have to justify

make mistakes

make my own decisions and cope with the consequences

say no

have some privacy, be alone and be independent

receive formal recognition for my work and achievements

10 Tips for Taking Control over Your Life

- 1 Stop the Thought of Controlling Others**
You can't make someone else be nice or do the right thing. Letting go of expectations of other people will free up your mind to focus on yourself.
- 2 Don't Compare Yourself to Everyone Else**
Don't waste time wishing you were like someone else, you are you, think about what you want and go for it.
- 3 Give Yourself Permission to Take Time for Yourself**
Think about what you would like to do, make a plan and do it.
- 4 Simplify Your Life**
Get organised, manage your time and ask for help.
- 5 Self-confidence vs Controlling**
To have confidence means that you believe in your ability to set priorities for yourself and stick to them regardless of influences surrounding you. To control means that you wish to control the actions of others and the outcome of things around you. As your confidence grows it will enable you to let go of outcomes to things that you have no control over.
- 6 How Others Treat You**
You may not have control over others actions but you have control over how you "allow" others to treat you. Don't let others deter you from your goals and ambitions.
- 7 Develop Personal Boundaries**
If you feel uncomfortable in a situation you have the right to address the issue or leave. No one can force you to tolerate something that is not ok with you.
- 8 Have Dreams**
Look inside yourself and rediscover your dreams. Make a list of all the things you truly want in your life and begin to take steps towards achieving them.
- 9 Develop a Support System**
Surround yourself with people who have positive attitudes who can be there for you when you need an extra boost to stay on track.
- 10 Say Thank You**
Think about who has helped you and say thank you. It will make you feel good to acknowledge them and they will feel appreciated.

How To Get Your Me Time Back!

If others are so dependable on you they are losing control of their own organisation and happiness and you have taken on that responsibility, you need to get some of your time back to spend on yourself.

Think about all your dependable relationships and see if someone else would be better placed to look out for some of them.

Now think about the people around you who could help to get things done. Try thinking what would happen if you were not around, who would do what?



You need to stop thinking that it is easier to do everything yourself. Other people need to chip in it is not fair that you are responsible for everything, so delegate.

Give it time to work out, don't just give in and do things yourself if it is not done when you want, or how you want.

Don't use your extra time helping other people, do what YOU want to do.

Practice Exercises for Improving Your Confidence

The following is a list of behaviour exercises which will prove useful in increasing your level of assertiveness. Choose one which would be moderately difficult and set a deadline to do it.

If you haven't done it by that time, either assume it was too difficult and choose another task, or alternatively, introduce a reward or incentive for doing it by another specified time.

1. Say "Good morning" to somebody whom you do not usually speak to.
2. Stop two people in the street and ask for directions.
3. Go into an expensive shop, try on a number of articles of clothing, but buy nothing.
4. Go into a shop and ask if they will give you change for a five-pound note.
5. Pay a compliment to a waitress, shop assistant or fellow worker.
6. Without expecting a response, make a comment to the person next to you in a queue or on a bus.
7. Buy something from a shop and then deliberately return it, saying, "I've changed my mind".
8. Deliberately touch someone you like on the arm or shoulder.
9. Tell your spouse or close friend something personal about yourself that you have never told anybody before.
10. Make a point of telling a joke or a funny story to a friend.
11. Ask somebody you know, "How are you today?" and deliberately take an interest; try to draw them out and find out how they are feeling.
12. Make a point of telling somebody how you are feeling, and/or what you have been doing recently.
13. Tell somebody that you like something about their appearance, for example, "I like that tie".
14. Tell somebody close to you something that has been irritating you about them which you haven't ever mentioned before.
15. Ask someone for a favour in a direct way.

Confidence Building Diary

To build my confidence this month I would like to:

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What I have done this month to build my confidence:



Week 1

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Week 2

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Week 3

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Week 4

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How do I feel now?

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What was difficult?

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SMART Goals

SMART goals are a good for if you want to change something and plan for the future. It is about identifying and setting out what you want to achieve, by writing down Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely goals you are more likely to carry them out.

Specific:

What do you want to do? How and Why?

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Measurable:

How will you know you have obtained your goal? How will you track your progress?

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Attainable:

Do you have the resources to enable you to achieve your goal?

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Realistic:

Are you able to achieve your goal?

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Timely:

Set a target date for completing your goal.

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SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is about identifying your Strengths and Weaknesses, and looking at the Opportunities and Threats which you face. It can be helpful to write about who you are and to prepare yourself for moving on.

Strengths:

What are you good at?
What skills do you have?



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Weaknesses:

What would you like to improve?
What should you avoid?



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Opportunities:

What would you like to do?
What could you do?



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Threats:

What obstacles do you face?



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Confidence is what you want to get back

Once you have confidence you will feel better

Negative feelings are not good, replace them with positive ones

Find time for yourself

Important – remember you are

Dress the part, making an effort with your appearance will help

Eye contact – maintain it when speaking and listening

No – it is ok to say no

Communicate – if you don't understand or need help ask

Enjoy yourself

Situations beyond your control will leave you feeling confused because they are not part of your daily routine so your brain has been put to the test.

Talking to people about what has happened to you can help.

Respect yourself for having overcome such a difficult period in your life.

Overcoming an abnormal event can take time, don't expect to feel fine straight away.

Never feel guilty or ashamed of what has happened to you, it was not your fault.

Go out, relax, have fun, enjoy yourself.



Salute yourself for having come through a difficult time in your life. Have a cup of tea, put your feet up and enjoy your life to the full.

Mainstream, having possibly shut yourself off from your family/friends because of the crime committed against you, don't you think it is time you renewed your relationships.

Independence is a factor you may have lost, as you are getting better start to make decisions by yourself. Learn to be strong and believe in yourself once again.

Look to the future with a feeling of achievement and never look back again.

Eliminate any feelings of guilt or shame for what has happened to you. It was not your fault, your conscience should now be clear of such thoughts.



Self confidence, the most important factor of all, after all that you have been through, show that you can achieve your aims in life for the future.

Persevere, you must never give up now, you have come a long way through your own endeavours.



Abstain from negative thinking, from now you have to be positive, there must be no going back, not now.

Respect yourself, you deserve to after what you have come through and do not ever lose it again no matter what.

Kindred spirit. It might help if you find someone of a similar position as yourself to discuss both points of view and ways on how you each overcome your difficulties.

Laughter. Learn to laugh again and look for happiness because you have earned it.

Emotions. It is a wonderful thing to be able to show emotions such as tears of sadness or happiness, shout with delight or cheer with joy. So let yourself relax and enjoy them as you have come through a difficult time and now, you will survive.



Vision to move forward

I have the confidence to take control of my life

Start to move forward

Independent I am and deserve the best

One day at a time

No looking back





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