

Move on Up!



**Recognise the skills you have – Boost your self-esteem –
Confidently take the next step that is right for you**

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Introduction

This workbook can help you identify your skills and qualities, improve your confidence and self-worth to look for employment, or identify your next step with greater self-assurance. You will have the opportunity to explore ways to challenge negative thoughts, use your time effectively, and work towards positive change. By recognising your emotions and communicating assertively, you can build positive relationships. You will also learn how to showcase your skills in writing and in person.

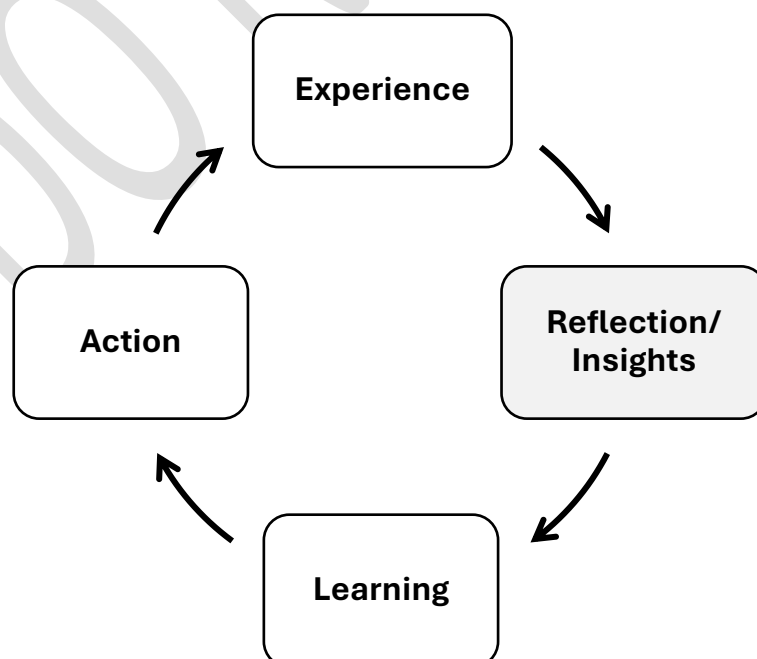
The Benefits of Reflective Practice

Engaging in reflective practice can improve your ability to respond differently in future situations. At the end of each session, you are encouraged to reflect on what you have learned. You may want to expand this activity and keep your own Reflective Diary.

Regularly practicing self-reflection is a process of continuous learning by recounting experiences, evaluating what was successful and identifying areas for improvement. By reflecting honestly on your experiences, you can avoid repeating mistakes and continue learning daily.

‘If you do what you have always done, you will get what you have always got.’

Break this cycle with reflective practice by adapting your actions based on reflections rather than merely reacting.



At times, it can be necessary to allow time between an experience and the reflection process. It is beneficial to begin by recording as much detail as possible without immediate reflection or review. Afterward, you may leave your initial notes for a short period or overnight before reflecting on them.

Focus on your actions, feelings, and thoughts, avoiding broad statements that merely outline the outcome; instead, delve deeper to analyse and reflect on what happened.

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Session One

Self-esteem and Self-confidence

Our self-esteem continually needs nourishing and nurturing if we are to become secure, confident, healthy and assertive human beings.

Consequences of Low Self Esteem

A person with low self-esteem is likely to place little value on their abilities and often deny any successes. When self-confidence is low it can be hard to try something new because of a fear of failure. Low self-esteem can also contribute to anxiety and confusion, leading to misunderstandings and potentially a distorted view of self and others.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements regarding your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement. Select the box that best represents your response without spending too much time thinking about your answer.

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	At times I think I am no good at all.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	I certainly feel useless at times.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Scoring

Circle the answer you gave for each question and write your score below. When you have completed scoring all 10 responses total your score.

No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	4	3	2	1
2	At times I think I am no good at all.	1	2	3	4
3	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	4	3	2	1
4	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	4	3	2	1
5	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	1	2	3	4
6	I certainly feel useless at times.	1	2	3	4
7	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	4	3	2	1
8	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	1	2	3	4
9	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	1	2	3	4
10	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	4	3	2	1

Total: **NB** The maximum score is 40

- If you have a low score (**15 or below**) then it is time to start thinking more positively and start to feel good about yourself. You can begin by making small changes and this course is designed to help.
- If your self-esteem score is a bit up and down (**16 to 29**) you need to start to feel more in control and more confident about yourself. Perhaps you can identify some of the key areas you need to work on.
- Even if this activity demonstrated that you are generally positive and feel confident about yourself and your life, (**score of 30 or above**) how about setting yourself some new goals - make them bigger and better!

The benefits of healthy self-esteem

A person with high self-esteem is likely to be more self-reliant and more able to cope with life's inevitable difficulties and failures. They are more likely to make decisions that are right for them and be willing to try new things, learning from mistakes and going forward with confidence to face future challenges. They are more able to recognise and develop their specific strengths and cope with change more successfully. They are also more likely to enjoy life, form successful, fulfilling relationships and attract genuine liking and respect from others.

The events, relationships and living conditions you experienced as a child

The experiences you have as a child have implications for how you see yourself. If these messages were mostly positive, then you are likely to manage the ups and downs of day-to-day life relatively well. However, if you were criticised, put down or neglected then this will have an impact on your sense of self-worth and confidence.

Adapting our Behaviour

As children, we adapt our behaviour based on the responses we receive. We might find that being good and quiet gets us what we want, or that shouting and kicking yields quicker results. At school, we also go through a similar subconscious learning process. There, we may find that the behaviour that worked best at home does not get the same results at school. We may begin to experiment with different approaches and responses.

This process of learning to adapt our behaviour to suit different social relationships is easier for some of us than others. Much will depend on how successful and satisfying our relationships with the most important figures in our life have been.

If our demands for physical and emotional nourishment from our parents or main carers were well met — we will find the process of adapting our behaviour to different situations relatively easy. If our early basic demands were not well satisfied — we will try again elsewhere. Unfortunately, we may try in the most inappropriate places and end up getting rejected.

We may generally be well catered for when it comes to our physical needs but catering adequately for our emotional needs is often not so easily achieved.

Major factors that can influence the formation of your identity

Complete the following table to consider what factors influenced your view of yourself.

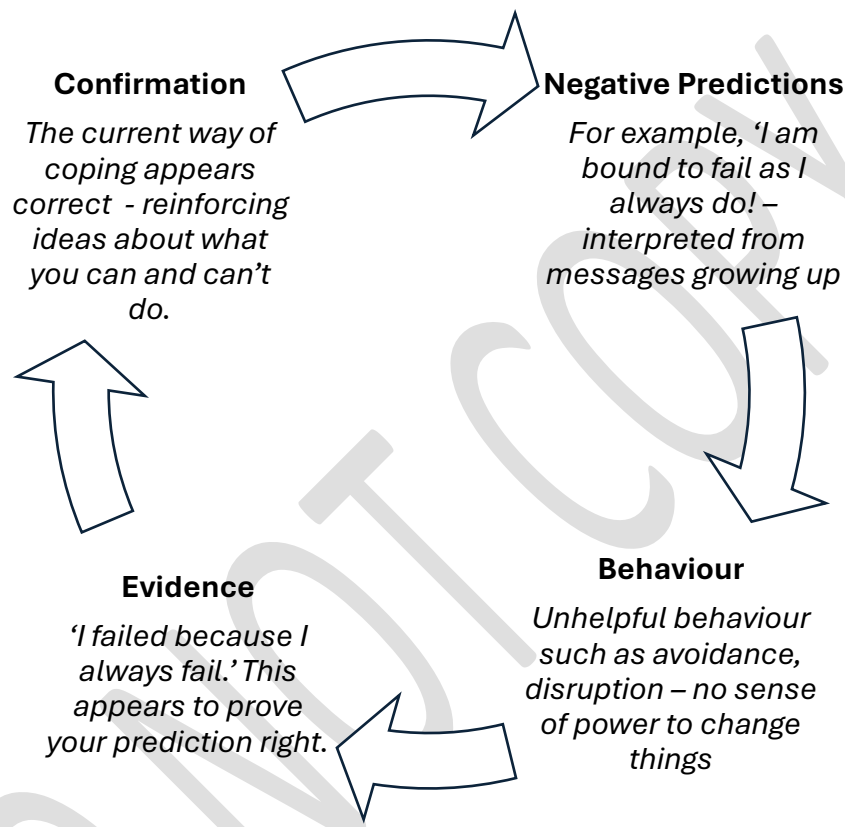
The reaction of others
<i>How did other people react? For example, did you receive warmth and praise or were you criticised and made to feel inadequate?</i>
Comparison with others
<i>Were you compared negatively with others? Did this alter your expectations regarding behaviour, achievement etc?</i>
Social roles
<i>Were you able to identify with the roles others like you were portrayed as being? How much did they impact on your behaviour?</i>

We can often be so busy blaming ourselves for being so inadequate that we haven't given a thought as to how our personal and social background might have affected our behaviour. A little understanding of this can help reduce the feeling of guilt and give our self-esteem and motivation a boost.

Rules for Living

Depending on the messages you received growing up they can become your 'rules for living'. The problem occurs when you have adopted 'rules' that appear to help you cope but are actually perpetuating a lack of self-worth and confidence.

Here is an illustration of how we can get caught up in a negative cycle of behaviour that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.



You can begin to break this negative cycle by realising this cycle occurs because of negative beliefs picked up whilst growing up and by acknowledging they are only **opinions** and not facts. It is also important to accept any positive experiences rather than discounting them and to recognise that these 'rules for living' are maintaining a lack of self-worth and confidence.

Conditions of Worth *"I'm not perfect... But I'm enough."*

Carl Rogers, known for client-centred therapy and for being one of the founders of humanistic psychology, highlighted that self-worth develops in early childhood through interactions between a child and their parent/carer. This can lead to the child only feeling loved *on condition* they are conforming to ways of behaving their parents/carers approve of. These '*conditions of worth*' represent the messages we take on board about what we need to do to feel valued. For example, we may feel

we are only of value if we ‘work hard’; ‘don’t get angry’; ‘never cry’; ‘please others’ and so on. If we don’t fulfil the conditions expected of us we are likely to interpret this as meaning we are not worthy.

These conditions of worth become our ‘drivers’, for example, ‘*I need to be perfect*’; ‘*I must be good at all times*’. However, striving to achieve unrealistic expectations is exhausting and can lead to chronic stress and ill health. It is impossible to sustain these ‘conditions of worth’ and we can be hit with shame and feelings of worthlessness and feel powerless to do anything to change things.

Write down what ‘conditions of worth’ you may have adopted.

If I am to be of value, I must:
Do any specific memories come to mind?
Have you made decisions based on these conditions of worth?

If your condition of worth has come from others’ ideas about what they think you should do, and this does not align with your natural talents, interests and abilities, it is likely to lead to a life of unhappiness and a lack of fulfilment.