

SELF-CONFIDENCE

HOW TO BECOME MORE SELF-CONFIDENT

What is self-confidence, why is self-confidence important, and how can we become more self-confident?

Confidence: Having faith in yourself

To start off, what is 'confidence'?

Confidence: Having faith in oneself.

So in other words, to be 'self-confident' means to have faith in yourself, your life's mission, and to believe in your own self-constructed morals and ideals.

Why is confidence important?

I don't think you can do anything in life without confidence.

To live a truly noble and epic life, you must ACT. We can only change the world through ACTION -- by doing something, by making something, and by publishing/sharing things/ideas/concepts/art.

We are all hungry for self-confidence.

I see this manifested in many ways. For example, we want more self-confidence manifested through exterior appearances, thus we spend a lot of money on fashion, clothing, fancy cars, fancy homes, etc. **Status symbols are only weak totems that insecure people use to try to feel more self-confident.**

And then when we see someone who is self-assured, we feel bad about ourselves, and thus we try to tear them down. We see the person who walks a little straighter, with more poise and nonchalance, and we call them "self-centered" and "arrogant".

I also think the reason we are so obsessed with celebrities is that we use them as sacrificial animals. For example, we hate on celebrities for being dumb, talentless, and selfish (for example people who hate Kim Kardashian) to feel better about ourselves. But **to try to feel better about ourselves by tearing others down or berating others is a weak form of self-confidence.**

Unfortunately it seems that the only role models we have in modern times are celebrities, sports athletes, musicians, entertainers, etc. We look up to these celebrities because they seem so self-confident and so self-assured-- and we wonder, "What is their secret sauce?" We assume (wrongly) that it is their fame, monetary wealth, or possessions that make them feel so self-confident in themselves. But in reality, there are many "successful" celebrities/actors/individuals who actually have very little self-confidence.

Self-directed self-confidence

The reason I like the concept of 'self-confidence' is that it is all self-directed.

In other words,

You have the control and power whether to be confident in yourself or not.

Of course if you are experiencing extreme depression, you cannot just "force" yourself to become more self-confident. I do believe that in order to build your self-confidence, you must somehow 'rationally' acknowledge *why* you are self-confident, have self-confidence in your physical and bodily image, and also allow yourself to be a little foolish in life.

Rational self-confidence

To become self-confident, you must give yourself a rational explanation *why* you are awesome.

For example, you can give rational reasons to be self-confident based on external measures (comparing yourself to others, comparing your income to others, comparing your social media followers with people less than you). But I don't think that comparing yourself is a good way to determine your self-confidence, because you don't have 100% control over this. Because no matter how hard you work, or how smart or talented you are, you don't have 100% control over how much money you earn, how many followers you have on social media, or your life circumstances.

The rational truth is no matter how unskilled, dumb, or "poor" we think we are, there is always someone with less than us. Even the philosopher Seneca told his friend Lucilius:

"The reason why most men are so wretched is that they always look at people in front of themselves, rather than look at the people who are behind them."

In other words, **the quickest way to become more grateful in life is to count your own blessings, and consider how many people who are poorer, more disenfranchised, and more unfortunate than you are.**

Thus to be rationally self-confident means to NOT care about those with more than you, but rather to judge yourself according to your own self-assessment and judgement of yourself.

You are unique and have special strengths, skills, and talents.

No matter who you are, you have certain skills, talents, and strengths in your life.

To build more self-confidence in a rational way, I suggest for you to continue to build, augment, and self-develop your skills.

For example, if your passion is photography, the best way to become more self-confident is to learn the history of photography, learn from the masters of photography, to study photographic composition, to shoot more, to get honest feedback and critique from photographers whose work you admire, and to keep strengthening your artistic portfolio.

Stay hungry, stay foolish

Steve Jobs was inspired by the quote by the Whole Earth Catalogue:

"Stay hungry, stay foolish."

I think this aphorism (saying) is apt, because:

- **Stay Hungry:** Don't be easily satisfied, keep striving for more
- **Stay Foolish:** Don't worry too much about what others think of what you are doing, just keep "doing you", and focusing on what you determine is important in your own life.

Consider, if you're not hungry for your entire life, why strive for more? Why strive to be more? To become more?

What is the opposite of hunger? Satiety (feeling full). I know when I am hungry (physically), my senses are sharpened and heightened. I move more, and feel more restless. I am more productive.

When I eat a huge meal and feel satiated (like after a 2-hour trip to all-you-can-eat Korean BBQ), I feel full, lazy, and just want to go to sleep. If I lived the rest of my life in a satiated/full state, what motivation would I have to keep moving, to keep acting, and to keep doing stuff?

Therefore, **satisfaction and satiation is the enemy of striving for more, and the enemy of doing more, and becoming more.**

What gives me more self-confidence

In terms of my personal self-confidence, the more I learn, the more I do, and the more I publish, the bigger my self-confidence grows.

I also know for myself, as I get older, I become more child-like and more foolish. Like the old Facebook motto from Mark Zuckerberg, "Move fast, and break stuff." I find myself becoming more reckless-- harnessing this child-like sense of experimentation of breaking stuff apart just to see how they work (I remember as a child the joy of dissecting electronics to figure out how they worked).

How I deal with self-doubt

Of course, I go through periods of time where I lose my self-confidence. I start to deeply doubt myself, doubt my ideas, and feel fear.

When I enter these periods of self-doubt, I use it as a positive experience to self-introspect, and self-reflect.

For example, I will try to face my inner-fears and ask myself, "Is this something I should be afraid of?" I also ask myself, "What is the worst-case scenario if my fear actually happened?" Usually when I rationally self-analyze my fears, I figure out that my fears are actually silly in real life.

I think self-doubt is good, as long as it gives you the opportunity to sharpen your own personal beliefs; to refine your thinking. Also, you don't want self-doubt to paralyze you into inaction.

Self-doubt can be good, because it can allow you to become more prudent and rational in your decision-making in your life.

Also to clarify,

You can still ACT and DO STUFF in life while having self-doubt.

In other words,

"Don't let self-doubt prevent you from action."

I believe that a slightly bad/wrong decision is better than no action. Just make sure that the downside of your decision won't bankrupt you or kill/maim yourself. That means to identify your maximum potential downside and ask yourself:

"If my maximum downside did in fact happen, would it be that bad, and am I okay with that?"

Conclusion

To sum up,

1. We cannot act and do stuff in life without self-confidence.
2. Self-confidence shouldn't be manifested through external measures of success. All self-confidence should come within ourselves.
3. We must be 'rationally' self-confident, by identifying our strengths, talents, and abilities.
4. Self-confidence isn't something that we are born with. Self-confidence is like a muscle-- something that we can build by augmenting our skills, knowledge, and through practice/action.
5. To be more self-confident, allow yourself to be foolish like a child.
6. Identify the "worst-case scenario" in your life, and don't let self-doubt paralyze you from action.
7. A small bad outcome from a wrong decision is better than no action.

BE BOLD, ERIC