Understanding Self-Esteem & Building Self-Worth

Explore your beliefs • Practice balanced self-talk • Build confidence

What is self-esteem?

Self-esteem is how you evaluate and relate to yourself. Low self-esteem can show up as harsh self-criticism, dismissing achievements, comparing yourself to others, or believing mistakes define your worth.

1. Recognize the pattern

- [ ] I minimize compliments or accomplishments
- [ ] I compare my progress to other people's lives
- [ ] I avoid trying because I fear failure
- [ ] I call myself names after making mistakes
- [ ] I feel my worth depends on approval or performance

2. Catch the inner critic

Write a self-critical thought you have noticed recently:

3. Try a balanced alternative

A practical example

Harsh thought: "I always mess everything up." Balanced thought: "I made a mistake, but I can learn from it. One moment does not define me." The goal is believable, fair self-talk—not forced positivity.

My more balanced thought:

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This worksheet is not a substitute for individualized mental health care.

Practicing Self-Worth in Everyday Life

Build evidence • Take action • Reflect on progress

4. Strengths and evidence

Name two strengths, values, or efforts you can support with a real example.

5. Choose a confidence-building action

- [ ] Try a manageable task I have been avoiding
- [ ] Accept a compliment with a simple “thank you”
- [ ] Spend time on a skill or interest that matters to me
- [ ] Set a boundary that respects my time or energy
- [ ] Write down one effort I am proud of each evening

6. My seven-day practice

One action I will practice and when:

What might get in the way? How will I respond?

Measure growth realistically

Confidence often grows through repeated experiences, not perfect outcomes. Notice effort, learning, and self-respect—not just results.

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