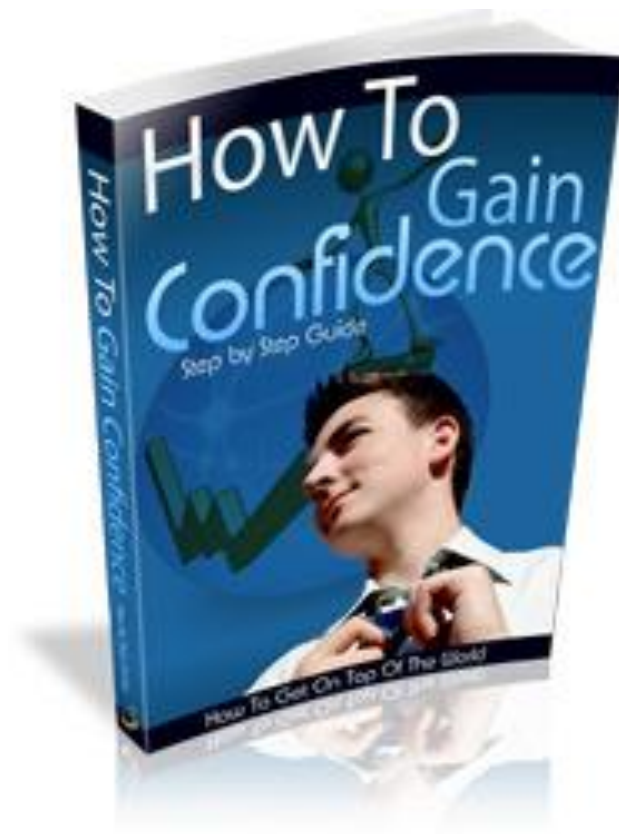


How To Gain Confidence!



Step By Step On How To Get On Top Of The World

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Chapter 1- Introduction

Have you ever noticed someone who was not all that physically attractive but seemed to lure those of the opposite sex to them? Have you observed someone at work who didn't really know that much about their job but was always getting raises? Have you ever noticed that some people seem to be able to captivate anyone they talk to and make friends easily?

What do these people have? One word - confidence. If you have confidence in yourself, you don't need anything else. Confidence is something that is sensed by others. People react to you if you have confidence in a different manner than if you have no confidence.

Have you ever noticed that when you are happy everything seems to be going right? When you are miserable, you tend to have a "bad day?" This is because you have confidence on the days that things go well and no confidence when things are going wrong.

The funny thing is that anyone can learn to develop more confidence. Remember the old line from "Forrest Gump?" "Life it like a box of chocolates?" It's not. Life is a marketing plan. It's an illusion. The entire box of chocolates can be whatever you want them to be and you can sell them to someone who hates chocolate if you have the right attitude. Confidence is the marketing plan that you have to use. The product you are marketing is you.

In this book, you are going to learn how much confidence you have, why you may have confidence, confidence destroyers as well as confidence builders. This book will teach you everything you know about the biggest marketing plan in the world - the confidence plan!

In order for you to attain more confidence, however, you have to be open to change. You have to be willing to modify your behaviour if needed so that you can achieve the greatest confidence. Confidence can be learned, but it does involve stepping out of your comfort zone and learning how to make certain changes in your behaviour patterns.

So sit back, relax and start learning how you can gain more confidence.

Chapter 2- Confidence in Childhood

I can remember very clearly asking my mother how young children knew that other young children were attractive. She told me that children picked up on how other people treated the more attractive kids. While physical beauty is something that will gain someone attention and, in some cases, special favours, confidence will get you more.

Observe children and you will see leaders in the group as well as those who are followers. There are also those who are loners or outsiders. Whenever you see a group of children playing, you will be able to distinguish all of these types of personalities.

The children who are the leader are those who have the most confidence. Those who follow usually have some confidence, but not nearly as much as the leader. The children who are least popular have little or no confidence. They will be those who are targeted for bullying or other nasty behaviour that not just children exhibit.

Why are some children confident and others lack any sort of confidence? This is a subject that is often brought up in counselling sessions when these children become adults. Many children who were singled out for bullying had little or no confidence due to abuse or dysfunction in the home.

Not all children who lack confidence are victims of physical abuse. Abuse encompasses different spectrums. In some cases, a parent may be over protective to the point where the child is not allowed to grow normally. Such a child will grow up to lack confidence.

Two examples of children who had a lack of confidence are Jill and Peter.

Peter grew up in an abusive home. His father was an alcoholic and his mother was co-dependent. When Peter's father would get drunk, which was often, he would beat up on Peter and his mother. This made Peter feel, at an early age, that he was "bad." After all, he must have done something pretty bad for him to always be getting hit by his father.

Jill grew up as an only child whose parents were both over 40 when they had her. She was quite a surprise. Jill's parents gave her everything she could possibly want. Unfortunately, she was given everything but the opportunity to

grow normally as a child. When other little girls were out playing games, Jill had to be in because she might “catch cold.” Jill’s mother was so over protective of Jill and so controlling that she actually used to wash Jill’s hair in the sink until the child was 12. Her reasoning was that she wanted to make sure Jill’s hair was clean and that this might seem too difficult for Jill to do.

When Peter got to school, he began to cause trouble. He bullied other children to take out his aggression on them. He went home and then became the punching bag for his father. At school, he was not well liked, but feared. Although Peter often equated this with admiration. Other kids did not bother Peter and often laughed at his jokes or when he picked on another child. This was only because they were glad he was not picking on them.

Jill had a very difficult time in school. The other children all seemed alien to her as she was only used to being around adults. Because she never really had to rely on herself for anything, she was totally unable to defend herself against other children who were bullies. It wasn’t long before Jill became the pariah of the school. She became the natural target of bullies who would rather pick on her than someone who would fight back. Jill lacked the confidence to stand up for herself at all. And the more she ignored the bullies, wishing them to go away, the worse it got.

Then there was Mark. Mark came from a decent home with two parents who loved him, but also gave him certain age appropriate responsibilities. They wanted Mark to grow into an independent adult but not a spoiled brat. They encouraged him with his efforts in sports and went to his games. They never told him that he was worthless, unlike Peter’s father, or did everything for him, like Jill’s parents.

In the school class, Mark was clearly the leader. Sure, the kids laughed along with Peter because they were afraid of him. But when it came down to it, Mark was the kid that everyone wanted at their birthday parties. Most of the kids did not want Peter at their parties and invited him only because they were afraid not to have him there. They didn’t want Jill at the parties because they just didn’t want to be associated with her.

We all can say “kids are mean.” I have heard adults say this all my life. And they are. But guess what? Kids are no worse than adults when it comes to being cruel. They are just more honest about it.

Adults are sneaky, but the same politics go on.

The group of children that we just discussed - Mark, Jill and Peter, and their classmates, can be compared to a pack of wolves. Wolves are the only wild animals that cohabit with man and the ones who are the most like us. In a wolf pack, there is the alpha male - the dominant wolf. In this case, that would be Mark. Although in the wolf world, brute strength wins, in the human world, intellect usually triumphs. We may be animals, but unlike animals, we can reason.

Peter was not an alpha male, but merely an aggressor in the pack. Jill was almost the lone wolf. If truth be known, the pack would much rather not have Jill and Peter in their midst.

And the reason for this is because both of them lack confidence. Peter may be getting by because of his bullying, but when Peter gets older and another kid who is bigger than him decides to clean up the playground with Peter, Peter will be reduced to Jill's status. Jill will probably remain the lone wolf throughout her life. She will automatically assume that others will not like her because of these experiences and may even do things to go out of her way to get them to dislike her so she feels some control over the rejection. She will make her behaviour become odder to further drive others away.

With confidence, both Jill and Peter can not only fit into the school environment easier, but they could become leaders. Confidence can be instilled in children and a child can get a fresh start somewhere else.

This is exactly what happened in Jill's case. Jill's teacher finally told her mother that Jill had no friends in school and was a loner. This was when Jill was about to enter high school. Jill's mother made an appointment for a counsellor for her daughter. Jill told the counsellor about how she felt that she did not have any control over her life, which was so orderly and protected that it was almost as if she was in a glass case. The counsellor couldn't believe the bit about the hair washing.

Fortunately, Jill's parents listened to the counsellor and realized that in trying to protect Jill, they were not only stifling her growth, but actually destroying her confidence level. Jill didn't feel that she could do anything on her own. Slowly, Jill began to develop confidence. It started in little steps. The first one was that Jill was washing her own hair, picking out her own clothes and making decisions for herself.

This was tough on Jill's parents. They really wanted to stop Jill from making any mistakes. The counsellor explained that their role in life was to allow Jill to become an independent adult.

In addition to making new decisions for herself, Jill also began to express her likes and dislikes. She liked art. Her parents enrolled her in art classes to help her with her self-esteem and confidence issues, at the advice of the counsellor. This helped Jill gain confidence in herself.

Jill entered a new high school in her freshman year, not the one that she would have gone to. In this new high school, no one knew Jill. And chances are that even her old schoolmates would not recognize her. Although she was far from being the confident young woman she would one day become, she was doing much better and, after years of being the social outcast, was finally making some friends.

Peter, on the other hand, entered high school and soon became insignificant. He continued with his bullying until he bullied someone that knew Karate. Peter got beat up by a kid that was smaller than him. This caused him to lose the friends he did have, who were no longer afraid of him. Peter stopped going to school in the 11th grade because by that time, he was drinking and not studying.

Mark went on to do well in high school and college. He had ups and downs like all young people, but for the most part, he remained happy and confident.

In schools across the United States, "self-esteem" is an issue. While some people scoff at the idea that this should be an issue at all, others take it to a new extreme and want to eliminate all competition. In some schools, grades are being eliminated. While younger children should be encouraged to participate in sports and other activities without being judged, they are in for a rude awakening if they think that their mere participation is going to get them accolades as they get older. Most schools and organized sports encourage the younger children and gradually get them acclimated to becoming more competitive as they get older.

Confidence can be instilled at any time in anyone's life. Obviously, the earlier, the better. If you want to instil confidence in your child, you need to do the following:

- Allow them to explore some things that they might enjoy such as sports, arts and other activities.
- Give them age appropriate jobs to do around the house, such as setting the table.
- Never call a child names or hit them in anger, this is just abusive behaviour and can be passed onto a child. If you find that you call your child a name, apologize to your child and be mindful not to do this again. If you do it again, seek therapy for your own sake as well as that of your child.
- Do not over praise them. This is just the opposite of the parent that never gives any praise. By constantly telling a child that everything he or she does is wonderful, you are setting them up for a big fall when they enter the real world. Give praise, but not on everything that they do.
- Encourage your child to pursue interests that he or she likes. Not those that you like. Remember, your goal is to raise an independent adult. Not Mini-Me;
- Allow your child to make mistakes. Obviously, you want to protect your child. You are not going to allow them to burn their hands on the stove and tell them “that will teach you.” But at the same time, you cannot do all of their crying and living for them. They are going to make mistakes. By allowing them to make mistakes, you can turn help them learn from their errors.
- Teach a child manners and respect for him or herself as well as others. Confident people are usually mannerly people. Manners are more than just about which knife and fork to use, too. They are about respecting other individuals.
- Give some independence. Do not feel that you have to over protect your child. Children will naturally push for more independence as they get older. You will naturally want to protect your child. Learn to give them age appropriate independence.

Raising confident children is the first step towards having more confident adults in the world. Those that take responsibility for their actions, are courteous to other individuals and who are not afraid to become leaders of tomorrow.

Chapter 3- Lack Of Confidence In Adults

Instilling confidence in adults is more difficult than in children. Children are more resilient. They can learn confidence that might not have been instilled in them. Adults are a whole different project.

Many adults lack confidence. They are afraid to try new things. They may have fears and phobias. Lack of confidence in an adult can be signified by some of the following symptoms or behaviour patterns:

- Depression
- Neurosis
- Anxiety
- Eating disorders
- Aggressive behaviour
- Anti-social behaviour
- Clumsy behaviour
- Mental illness
- Physical violence
- Alcoholism or other addiction
- Co-dependent behaviour

Depression and anxiety go hand in hand. Get to the root of depression and you will most likely find a lack of confidence. A person is afraid of something unknown, has no faith in himself or others and it usually manifests itself in this way.

There are many different types of anxiety, including social anxiety.

People with a lack of confidence often suffer from social anxiety, which was only recently diagnosed. Amazingly, Donny Osmond, who was once the idol of millions of teenaged girls, admitted that he suffers from social anxiety.

Looking at Donny Osmond, it might be difficult to believe that he would lack confidence. Apparently, Osmond's lack of confidence came when he was no longer adored by millions and found himself on the edge of obscurity at the age of 23.

There is a flip joke that states the three saddest words in English are “former child star.” Donny Osmond had to wear that label. So did many other former child stars. How many of them are in prison? Dead from drug overdoses or suffering from addictions? It can be very confidence shattering when Hollywood doesn’t want you anymore and you are washed up at the age of 17. And it happens to former child stars. Many of them suffer from lack of confidence that leads to other dangerous behaviour.

Fortunately for Donny Osmond, he had his faith. A devout Mormon, Osmond was surrounded by a large family and also remains married to his wife and has several children of his own. However, both he and his sister, once the top idols in the 1970s, both suffered from mental disorders. And it is a good guess that both were brought on by an onslaught of attention that was suddenly withdrawn. The teenaged years are tough anyway. Imagine being labelled “washed up” at a time that you are supposed to be starting out in life.

Singer Karen Carpenter was another 1970s icon. Unfortunately, although she came from a supportive family, she lacked confidence in herself because of her appearance. An attractive young woman, she got the idea that she was fat and began to diet. She began dieting so much that it became an obsession with her.

Karen Carpenter had a gruelling schedule. Her life was not hers to control. Instead, it was under the care of managers, publicity agents and tour managers. The one thing she could control was her weight. This is the case with most anorexics. This is a mental disorder that affects young women. Most young women develop the disorder at a crucial time in their lives, such as entering high school or college.

Unfortunately for Karen Carpenter, despite the fact that she had support from her family and everything that someone could want to live for, including a brilliant career, anorexia took its toll. Although she sought help for the disease, it was too late. She ended up dying from heart failure at the age of 32.

You will often see adults with no confidence acting aggressively. Many adults who were bullied as children seem to have a chip on their shoulder and end up taking out their frustrations on the rest of the world. Anti-social behaviour can go hand in hand with aggressive behaviour. The adult who lacks confidence does not like himself very much. Because he doesn’t like himself, he may also

think that others do not like him as well. So he exhibit anti-social behaviour right from the start to “prove himself right.” He does not have to experience the pain of rejection if he does the rejecting first.

Clumsy behaviour is often found in those who lack confidence. They are always dropping things, getting injured or just appear reckless. This is because they do not even have enough confidence to hold onto a tea set or drive in the right direction. Lack of confidence makes you question everything you do. You always feel as though you are going to make a mistake so you appear clumsy and awkward.

Violent behaviour can go along with lack of confidence and anti-social behaviour. It also goes hand in hand with alcoholism and other addictions, many of which are the result of someone self-medicating for the fact that they suffer from lack of confidence.

Dave is such a person who suffers from lack of self-esteem. Although he is handsome and amiable, Dave was bullied in high school and never really got over it. He married his high school sweetheart, who was the first girl who ever went out with him.

It was not unusual for Dave to turn to drinking when he was in high school. It made him feel more outgoing and able to talk to people. And because he grew up with an abusive father, he really didn't stand much of a chance. By the time he was 17, he had dropped out of high school and was selling drugs. He moved out of his parents' house and away from his abusive father. But he could never get away from him in his head.

Dave married his high school sweetheart and they quickly had two children. Although he never abused the kids, he did start hitting his wife. And his drinking was spiralling out of control. It wasn't long before his wife threw him out of the house.

After that, Dave took up with a woman named Linda. Like Dave, she had grown up in an abusive house where alcoholism ruled. She was used to men beating up women because her father often beat up her mother. Linda was also divorced and the reason she divorced her husband was because he beat her up. But Linda lacked confidence. Everyone she met who was nice to her was considered “boring.” As a result, Linda looked for exciting guys like Dave.

The two of them continued in their downward spiral. Both with a lack of confidence that stemmed from childhood and both with different issues. Dave suffered from depression, anxiety and alcoholism. Linda suffered from anxiety and co-dependency. Both fought a lot and then got back together. One night, Dave decided to backhand Linda in the bar they were in. The police were called, Dave went to jail. Linda was advised to go to a woman's shelter.

Addicts have to hit rock bottom before they get help. Both Linda and Dave hit rock bottom that night that he publicly hit her in a bar. After that, Dave went in to alcoholics anonymous. At first, it was court appointed that he had to join some program. But after a while, he liked the group and his sponsor.

He also took counselling and began to make amends with his childhood. Although his father was long dead, he learned to forgive him and let go. He made it through the 12 step program and is still working towards being clean and sober.

Unfortunately, Linda just went out and found another guy who drank and beat her up, like Dave. Some folks get help, others do not. In many cases, court appointed help can end up being a blessing. It was for Dave as it probably saved his life.

Lack of confidence in adults is caused by many different reasons and manifests itself in many different ways. Someone who likes themselves knows how to respect themselves. They also generally know how to respect others. They do not bully. They do not seek out inappropriate relationships. They do not behave violently. They are not self-destructive.

While there are other causes of depression other than low self-confidence, those with low self-confidence often suffer from depression and the other illnesses that go along with it.

Recognizing signs of low self confidence in yourself or in others who you love is the first step in getting help. It is never too late to restore some confidence. In the next chapters, we are going to explore how we can work on becoming more confident as adults.

Chapter 4- Exercise for Confidence

This sounds crazy, but it works. Exercise is almost like a cure all for just about everything that ails you. Exercise can boost your mood, raise your energy level, boost your immune system and also keep your body healthy. It works well to promote both good physical and mental health.

The first thing you should do when trying to install confidence in yourself is to either start your own exercise program at home or join a gym or class. There are plenty of classes that you can join that will not cost you a lot of money. Check out your local parks and recreation department regarding such classes.

Exercise is a great way to get yourself started on your new life - your new confident life. Each time you complete your exercise program, you will have given yourself a confidence boost. Why? Because you completed something. You made a commitment to exercise and followed through. That in itself is a confidence booster.

There are different types of exercise that you can do to raise your endorphins, enhance your mood and raise your confidence level. These include low and high impact cardio vascular exercises and stretching or Pilates.

To begin raising your confidence level with exercise, you must first set aside a portion of the day when you plan to exercise and try your best to stick to this time. It is never a good idea to exercise strenuously, such as cardio vascular exercises, before you go to bed. This will make you energetic and not allow you to sleep. You should do this in the morning or when you get home from work.

If you want to join a gym, fine. You can also eventually meet others who want to exercise at the gym as well. Remember that you are going there to exercise and not scout for flirtations. As a matter of fact, you shouldn't be looking to trying for a relationship before you instil some confidence in yourself. This is a big no-no. Many people try to fix themselves by using other people. It doesn't work and usually just ends up making everyone miserable. Besides, you will be far more attractive if you have a lot of confidence that if you are seeking a person who is going to "cure you."

You can purchase exercise equipment for your home or you can also just do some basic exercises at home. If you have steps, you can use them to go up

and down. Stair climbers are high impact cardio vascular exercise machines found in the gym. They cost thousands of dollars. If you have steps at home, you can get the same results for free.

Jumping jacks - remember them? Good cardio vascular exercising that is high impact. Another is running. Take a run around the block. Start out small and walk when you get tired. If you do this every day, you will soon find that you can make it around the block without stopping. Then you can try for two laps.

You can invest in a cross country exercise machine or a treadmill. These are low impact cardio vascular exercise machines that do not hurt your knees. If you would like, you can take up a class at a gym or your local park department. Some people like aerobics classes and although they are now over 30 years old, they are still very well liked in gyms. This is because they work.

By exercising every day you are raising your confidence level in a number of different ways. They include the following:

- Setting a goal each day and completing it
- Feeling physically good about yourself
- Doing something healthy for your body
- Giving your energy level a boost

Concentrating on something positive that you are doing for yourself.

Of course, there are also physical benefits to exercise as well. Again, exercise is the cure all for a number of different ailments, both physical and mental.

Before starting a strenuous exercise program, talk to your doctor. You want to make sure that you are in good health if you are beginning jogging or using stair climbers. Most doctors will agree that any type of exercise is beneficial to your overall health.

Chapter 5 - Yoga and Meditation

Yoga and meditation have been around for a long time and have been used in both the spiritual aspect as well as secular aspect. You can employ yoga and meditation to helping you gain confidence in yourself.

Most people think that yoga consists of getting your body in a number of contorted poses and holding still for a period of time. This is not the case. While there are certain yoga principals that ask you to hold a certain position, for the sake of eliminating your consciousness of that position, there are other yoga practices that rely on you being totally relaxed. Meditation can be done in a number of different ways as well. While some practice meditation where the mind must go completely blank to let in enlightenment, others concentrate on a particular object to meditate.

Most religions rely on some form of meditation. This includes praying with beads, reciting verses of scripture and repeating chants. Catholics, Muslims and some other groups use prayer beads. Although meditation is considered part of Buddhism, and an Eastern religious philosophy, it has also spread to Western religious philosophy. It is just practiced in a different way.

To start with meditation, the first thing you need to do is to make a commitment that you will practice meditation for at least 30 days. After that time, if you do not enjoy this practice, stop. But at least give it a fair try.

The first day you might want to put 10 minutes aside. You can get into a comfortable position and then allow your mind to go to a peaceful zone. Think of the most perfect place on earth and that it is filled with the perfect people, the perfect food, the perfect music - everything. This is your inner utopia. Keep it as your own. Each time you meditate, you can go to your inner utopia for the designated time period.

The trick to this type of meditation is that you cannot use this inner utopia in any other way. You can only visit this place during meditation. This will make you want to meditate each day.

What does this prove? Well, for one thing, you will be able to stick with a commitment. You will have set a time each day to meditate and you will be able to continue this each and every day. As you continue to practice meditation, you will find peace within yourself. Most people who have no

confidence or low self-esteem have no inner peace. By using yoga and meditation, you can strive for inner peace.

Give it a shot. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Practice yoga and meditation for 10 minutes each day and work towards that personal utopia. You will feel in a more confident mood when you leave your utopia and, knowing that it waits for you every day is a feeling of empowerment.

Some might say that this is a way to “escape” reality. This is arguable. But what is more detrimental - escaping to a peaceful place for a while through meditation or escaping by taking a few dozen drinks? I think the former.

Yoga and meditation, if nothing else, will relax you. At best, it will help you work towards restoring your confidence.

Chapter 6 - Affirmations For Confidence

You have heard of affirmations. They were often mocked in a Saturday Night Live sketch with “Stuart Smalley.” This was a fictional talk show host who would start his show by saying that he was great and people liked him when looking in a mirror. It was a funny sketch and self-affirmations may seem funny at first. But the funniest thing of all about self-affirmations are that they work.

Years ago, when I was a young woman, I used to work in a bank. It was a habit of mine to say that I was “tired” whenever one of my customers asked me how I was. It was a habit. I wasn’t really tired, I just began using that as my pat answer. But funny enough, I did actually start feeling more tired with each passing day.

One day, a man who I knew well admonished me for saying this. He was an older gentleman and said that if I said I was tired all the time, I would be tired. And it stuck in my head. I stopped saying that. And do you know what? I didn’t feel tired any longer.

When you are a young person of 19 and an “old” person of about 40 tells you something, you are normally inclined to dismiss their advice. But for some reason, I took this advice. And it worked. I started catching myself from saying that I was “tired” and started saying that I was doing “great” when people asked me how I was. And sure enough, I felt great.

By telling myself I was tired all of the time, I actually did start to feel tired. My life improved for the better when I started telling myself that I was doing great.

A lot of people are superstitious when it comes to saying that they are doing well. Envy is supposed to be very powerful - so powerful that someone can actually curse your good luck if you are doing well. For this reason, we are taught not to brag or tempt fate by saying we are doing well. Notice how people will cry poor and downplay their success. This comes from years of being trained not to brag.

Saying that you are doing well is not bragging. Telling yourself that you are beautiful each morning in the mirror is a good idea. If you don’t say it, who else will? Okay, you can leave out the “and gosh darn it, people like me,” but you can give yourself praise.

People who are confident do not have a problem giving themselves praise. They do not have a problem with their success. This is not to say that all successful people are confident. There are plenty who go on a path of self-destruction out of some misplaced sense of guilt because of how they were brought up.

Let's take two different people and how they handle their success:

Donald Trump

Oprah Winfrey

Both of these people are among the most well known in the world. They are two of the wealthiest Americans. Trump came from an upper middle class family, but succeeded his family's dreams by more than anyone could imagine. He not only does pretty well in the real estate game, but he has published several books, opened up a number of casinos and also has a very successful television program.

Donald Trump makes no apologies about himself or his appearance or attitude. He gets criticized in the press. People make fun of his hair. Donald Trump doesn't care. Sometimes, he even makes fun of himself.

Oprah Winfrey is the wealthiest woman in the United States. Born in poverty, she rose on her own to become a wealthy television icon. She began her career as a newscaster and quickly rose through the ranks of being a popular talk show host.

Although she soon became famous for exhibiting compassion that was unlike anything before seen on television, Oprah Winfrey was far from confident. She battled her weight. As a matter of fact, she battled her weight all of her life. She is also the victim of sexual abuse at a young age. She did not have a happy childhood - not by a long shot.

As she became wealthier, more information came out about Oprah and the more popular she became. Her weight continued to balloon and she has been engaged to the same man for about 20 years. It is doubtful that she will ever get married.

Oprah Winfrey is always lauded for her charitable works. She gives away cars on her shows and also started a school in Africa for girls. She has acted in several films and is known as the most successful female personality in the United States.

But whereas Trump exudes confidence, Oprah Winfrey is constantly apologizing for behaviour and her battles with her weight and food addiction have become legendary. Many psychologists feel that Oprah uses food as a way to starve off feelings that stem from her abusive childhood.

In addition to surviving abuse, Oprah Winfrey also encountered racism and sexism early in her career - another roadblock to success (which she overcame with panache) but something that might harm her confidence level.

Despite the fact that they are both wealthy and virtually self-made (although Oprah is a little bit more self-made than Donald) both Trump and Winfrey are quite different.

Trump exudes confidence. Oprah does not.

There is some speculation that the crowd that loves Oprah loves her because of her lack of confidence and her flaws. They relate to her.

She actually lost ratings when she slimmed down.

You can bet that Donald Trump uses affirmations in his daily life. He is not saying them out loud, of course, but he thinks he's great. He comes across as a confident individual.

Oprah, on the other hand, appears to be almost guilty about her success. She is constantly making a show of giving money away to the poor. She does not exude confidence, despite the fact that she is the wealthiest woman in America.

Some might think that what difference does it make? After all, Oprah is rich beyond belief. What difference does it make if she has confidence or not?

The difference is that most people who do not have confidence do not become the wealthiest woman in the United States. They rarely become successful. Oprah Winfrey is an anomaly. Donald Trump? The world is filled with guys like him. They are usually quite successful.

Say affirmations to yourself each day. You can say them out loud or to yourself. Look into the mirror and really think about what you like about yourself and then notice it and repeat it to yourself. Think about the personality aspects that you like about yourself. Do not dwell on those that you want to change but those that you like.

Think positively about yourself on a daily basis. No longer respond that you are “tired” or doing “okay.” You are doing terrific, life is great and you are the greatest. And gosh darn it, people like you. Okay, you can skip that, but you get the picture.

Seriously, if you start to tell yourself nice things about yourself each day, they will not only become real to you, but to others as well. Just as the same way it worked with me not talking about how tired I was any longer, self-affirmations can work with you.

Chapter 7 - Face Your Fears

Anxiety is usually the result of fears. While some fears are unknown, others are well known. Some fears are reasonable. Most people would fear a murderer stalking the streets, a rabid dog on the loose or a stormy night where a maniac has just escaped from the asylum and you are camping in the woods.

Most fears, however, are unfounded. These are often called phobias. They are fears of different objects or situations that can stalk someone throughout their life. Some of the most common fears include:

- Fear of flying
- Fear of speaking in public (even more feared than death, actually)
- Fear of doctors
- Fear of dogs or animals
- Fear of getting a medical test
- Fear of the marketplace (agoraphobia)
- Fear of spiders

Most of these fears can end up crippling you. Not literally, but figuratively. Why? Because they will prevent you from doing something that you want to do.

I have a friend who was terrified of taking a mammogram. She knew she should take one each year after the age of 40, but was afraid. She was 45 years old and had never before had this potentially lifesaving test.

The fear of mammograms got to be so bad that she actually began to exhibit signs of anxiety during the month of October which is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. She would become very anxious. To the point where she went to see a doctor for what she calls a “chill pill” but what the medical professional calls a tranquilizer.

Instead of just giving her the tranquilizers, her doctor made a deal. In order to get the tranquilizers, she would have to get the mammogram. And he would ask for the results stat, which means right away. This would alleviate some of her fears. She agreed.

Her doctor was very compassionate and allowed my friend to combat her fear of mammograms. The test came back normal, she didn't even need the tranquilizers but best of all, she exuded confidence.

She did something that she feared the most and came out on top. She felt great and you could just see it in her face that her confidence level was really high.

Facing your fears is one of the easiest ways to give your confidence an instant boost. Think about the thing you fear the most. Is it a medical test, like my friend? Or perhaps calling a relative who you have not seen in a long time? Or maybe it is just a fear of speaking in public?

Whatever your fear, if it is unreasonable, you need to conquer the fear. People who are afraid of heights often take up parachuting to alleviate this fear. Once you have conquered your worst fear, you will feel like you are on top of the world. And you will be, too. Because your confidence level will really shine through.

Conquering your irrational fears is one way to give your confidence level an instant boost.

Chapter 8 - Hobbies

Do you like to knit? Scrapbook? Paint? Perhaps you have always wanted to do one of these things but never made the time. If you want to build up your confidence level, make the time. By making the time to do something that you have always wanted to do, you will give yourself a confidence boost.

Hobbies can be anything. Be sure that it is something that you enjoy just for the sake of enjoyment and not just something to use to make money. Find something that you have always wanted to do and do it.

You can take classes at your local parks and recreations department to learn a craft or hobby that you have always wanted to learn. You can either go with a friend or by yourself. You can also find friends at these classes that share a similar enthusiasm.

Don't say that you don't have the time - that is just an excuse. You have to make the time - this will give you more confidence in yourself. It doesn't hurt to take a class and no one will laugh at you if you make a mistake. There will always be those who do worse.

Taking up a hobby that you have always wanted to do does several things to instil confidence in you. Including the following:

Taking time for yourself. Most people who have no confidence in themselves do not feel worthy of taking time for themselves. They actually feel guilty when they take time for themselves, as if they are not worthy.

Learning something new is always a good way to gain confidence. You feel as though you have accomplished something that you never accomplished before. You will feel better about yourself when you have learned this new hobby.

Meeting other people who may also enjoy this hobby. As human beings, we are social creatures. We strive to meet those who think like us. This is a good way to meet new friends and get to know fellow enthusiasts.

Completing a goal. Completing a goal for yourself is yet another way to give yourself a shot of confidence. Each time you complete a goal, even if it is learning a hobby, you will give yourself a boost.

Doing something that you like or perfecting an art form that you like is an excellent way to keep your mind busy and to treat yourself to some pleasure in life. You do not have to live a life devoid of pleasure. This only makes you feel less confident in yourself. Take up a hobby and start feeling better.

Chapter 9 - Volunteer

Want to feel good about yourself and also do something useful for other people? Volunteer your services to a needy charity. This is an excellent way to feel that you are accomplishing something and not just feeling sorry for yourself.

You will feel as though you have truly given back to the community once you volunteer to do something for someone or an organization. You do not have to make a big deal out of volunteering your services. Do something small like take a neighbour grocery shopping who cannot get out or bring over diapers to a new mom. These little things are very much appreciated.

Not only will this give you a chance to do something that will work well for others, but also for yourself. There is no greater confidence booster than doing volunteer work and helping other people. You will feel needed - and that is the greatest gift many can get.

Some places where you can volunteer your services that you will be welcome:

Nursing homes. Many people in nursing homes are literally starved for company. Think about it - they lay in bed all day, hoping someone visits them. Make it a ritual. And if you bring them a little treat, they will be very happy.

Hospitals. Although they can be depressing, hospitals need volunteers. You can do a number of different duties, including talk to those who just need someone to talk to. This can be a great way to spend an hour a week. And taking an hour a week to help others is not a lot of time. Believe me, it will come back to you in triple fold.

Charity organizations. If you have charity organizations such as food drives or pantries, you can also volunteer to work at these places as well. Again, most of these places run on volunteer efforts of those in the community.

Volunteering your time for your fellow man can be very rewarding. Do not make a big show of it, but just use your time to do what you can for others. This helps not only the people who you are helping, but also yourself as well.

Chapter 10 - Evaluate Your Job

I have a friend who was depressed for two years, despite being on a host of medication. The reason for the depression was that she hated her job. She didn't realize it at the time that she didn't like her job and that she was not suited for the work. She felt that she should stick it out because she had children to support and was their sole means of survival.

Then one day, this woman got fired from her job. It was funny, but it was Friday the 13th. A day of bad luck for sure. She was absolutely devastated. She had no idea what she was going to do. She then began to evaluate what she wanted to do.

This person had worked as a paralegal. It was a very detail oriented job. She had worked in the law field most of her life and really didn't like the profession. Oh, it wasn't lawyers that she minded, but it was the fine details. Lawyers, as a rule, have to pay fine attention to detail. My friend found this annoying. It was not her habit. As a matter of fact, she would prefer to do something more creative.

Then it hit her. Why not do something more creative? After all, she had the time on her hands now to pursue this dream. And it couldn't be worse than getting up and going each day to a job she hated.

So she began teaching tole painting, which is a type of painting technique that is done mostly on glassware. She started in her home with a few students. She then branched off with a few more students.

Pretty soon, she was renting a classroom to teach this class. Then another area wanted her to teach there.

Before she knew it, my friend had scores of students as well as venues in which to teach. The funny thing was that she was making more money in her painting than she was with her paralegal job. And it was more creatively fulfilling. I guess you know the rest - she ended up getting off the anti-depressants and is now very successful in a field that she likes.

Many adults feel less confident in themselves because of their jobs. Especially if you are going to a job that you really dislike. It is not worth it, no matter what they pay you. How can you put a price on your own happiness? And if

the job is taking a toll on you, it is taking a toll on your confidence. It is really not worth the effort.

If you are an adult suffering from self-esteem issues as well as confidence issues, you need to re-evaluate your employment and see if you are in the field that is right for you. It is never too late to switch and do something else. If you are unhappy at work - this takes up 8 hours a day. Why go through that? Life is too short and no one needs the money that bad. Better to be poor and confident than rich and miserable and feeling like you can't tie your own shoes because you have a bully boss who browbeats you every day.

Chapter 11 - Relationships

If you are having confidence problems, it could be your relationship. If you are in a relationship with someone who is always putting you down, you need to step back and decide if this is worth it. In most cases, it is not. Even if you have children and decide to “stay for the sake of the children,” you are not doing them any favours. The only thing you are teaching them is that it is okay for them to treat you with no respect.

Everyone deserves respect in a relationship. If you are not getting it, this can be the reason why you are suffering from lack of confidence. You need to seriously examine why you are in this relationship and what you are getting out of it.

I cannot think of much that would cause me to stay in an abusive relationship. As a matter of fact, I cannot think of one thing. People who stay in such relationships and give their kids as an excuse are, I'm sorry to say, pathetic. They are teaching their children inappropriate behaviour. They might as well give them a carton of cigarettes, a bottle of whiskey and tell them to “have at it.”

If the person with whom you are in a relationship with is just your significant other and you have no children together and they are berating you a lot, you need to either go into counselling and find out what their problem is, or get out of their life. It is that simple. If you have children with this individual, you need to go into family counselling. If you have been married for a while to this individual, chances are that he or she already did significant damage to you and your children, but it is never too late to right a wrong. Or to stand up for yourself.

Eleanor Roosevelt said “Only you can make yourself feel inferior.”

Many people blame others with whom they are in a relationship for “stripping away their confidence.” This is not true. Mrs. Roosevelt was right. Only you can take away your own confidence. Never give someone else that power.

People who end up in abusive relationships generally have very little, if any, self-confidence to begin with. The relationship is merely a symptom of the illness. But, when a person relieves themselves of a toxic relationship, they have a renewed sense of confidence.

Taking charge of your life, especially in the relationship department, can be very difficult. You may have family or clergy pulling at you to stay put. While they may mean well, they probably do not understand the true problem. And the true problem is not your husband or wife, but yourself. You are the one allowing someone to abuse you. You are the one allowing someone to chip away at your confidence. You are the one allowing someone to destroy you.

Is the abuser at fault? Of course. But he or she is not your problem. Your problem is your total lack of confidence in yourself and why you allow this to go on. You have to make a stand, empower yourself and stop the abuse.

Can someone who is abusive get help? Yes. There are many different programs that they can enrol in to help them overcome their anger issues. Chances are that someone who is abusive also lacks confidence and may have chemical dependencies or alcoholism as well.

And you should encourage them to seek help.

Should you stay with them while they are in counselling? Absolutely not. Once they have successfully completed the counselling, you can then both work together towards repairing your marriage. In the meantime, you have to focus on your own problems, which is why you allowed the abuse to continue, or even why you chose an abusive mate. And then you have work on building up your confidence. Only then will you be able to engage in a relationship of any sort.

Most of us feel an obligation towards those with whom we are in a relationship. And it is right to feel an alliance with them. But not at our own expense. If you are involved in a toxic relationship where another party is abusive, either physically or mentally, you have to take control of your life and the relationship and do something about it. End the relationship, separate from the other party or whatever you have to do. You cannot sacrifice your self-esteem for the sake of a marriage or children. In the long run, the children are better off living in a shack with you as a role model to whom they can admire than a palace with you as a doormat. Because your children learn most of what they know about relationships from you. And if you show them a twisted and dysfunctional relationship, chances are that they will mimic you when they grow up.

Chapter 12 - What Is Confidence?

Have you ever heard of a confidence game? It is an old fashioned term that was shortened to “con game.” A confidence game is where you draw someone into your confidence and then proceed to cheat them. This type of confidence is different from personal confidence.

In a way.

A true con artist relies on gaining trust from another individual. Because of this, they end up getting bank accounts, money, social security numbers, credit cards and other valuable information. A true con artist is someone who works one on one with others and is quite good at tapping into the weaknesses of other individuals and preying on them. The true con artist knows that a good many people in the world will believe something, just because you told them that it was true.

The same philosophy works with personal confidence. Although you do not want to have the lack of scruples of a confidence artist, you do want to be able to convince others that you are a wonderful and trustworthy person. More importantly, you want to be able to convince yourself of this.

Freud said that we are who we imagine others think we are. Think about this statement for a moment. Then figure out what sort of person others imagine you to be.

It doesn't matter what others actually think of you - it matters what you imagine what others think of you. Because self-confidence, like the confidence game, is all an illusion. It is a con game. It's the biggest con game in the world and you are the mark.

If you want to be great at your profession or have a wonderful relationship with a new person, you have to have the confidence in yourself. If you have it, no one will be able to stop you. Have you ever seen a person with supreme confidence enter a room? They radiate. Ever see someone with no confidence enter a room? Chances are you ignored them.

By using these simple tools to try to exude confidence in yourself, you can learn how to become a more confident individual. It is very simple - you have to like yourself and believe that you can do anything.

Follow these simple rules to start getting more confidence right now:

1. Imagine where you want to be in 5 years and then picture yourself there. Tell people your goal. Do not be ashamed to state your goal - if it is positive. Work towards it. Example - I know someone who wanted to be a writer. She was struggling with trying to make a living and when people would ask her what she did for a living, she would say that she was writing but looking for “real work.” She never considered her writing job as “real” and downplayed any success.

Then this woman decided to say that she was a writer. She decided to actually tell people that she was a freelance writer, instead of a person who was writing to pay bills until something else better came along. Guess what? The offers started rolling in. Her confidence was catchy.

You can do the same thing. Picture your goals and do not be ashamed of stating them. Then work towards those goals and behave as though you have already achieved them or are on your way to achieving them. What you tell people, they will believe. But the most important person you need to tell is yourself.

2. Stop looking for someone to blame. Having confidence means taking total control of your life. If you want to truly be confident, then you have to be willing to take personal responsibility for everything that you do. While there can be certain things that you cannot control (such as an accident) most things are within your control.

There was a man who was so busy blaming others for his failures that he couldn't see it was his own negative energy and lack of confidence that was keeping him down. He blamed the boss for not recognizing his success. He blamed his co-workers for his mistakes. He blamed women he dated because they were not honest or they cheated him in some way.

Then one day, this man attended a seminar on confidence building. He began to modify his behaviour. He stopped blaming others and started taking personal responsibility for his actions. Things started to turn around for him. With work and his personal relationships. Because he started seeing himself in a different light, others followed.

3. Realize your marketing potential. If you are good at drawing, for example, employ that in your everyday life. Find something in which you excel and practice it as much as possible. And don't keep it a secret, either. Make sure others know about your talent and that you use it to your full advantage.

Remember that life is all about having a good marketing plan to sell the one product that is most important - yourself. And you cannot sell it if you are all over the board trying to figure out if it's even good.

For fun, imagine yourself as an advertising executive who has to market a bottle of ketchup. This ketchup is no different than any other ketchup. It is made from tomatoes and has a taste that many people enjoy. How do you market the ketchup?

If you put out an ad that says "This is ordinary ketchup. It's okay. There are some that are better but you can buy this one if you want." do you think many people will be buying it?

On the contrary, if you put out "This is the best ketchup you have ever tasted? It is smooth, has a subtle flavour and is made from the finest tomatoes," do you think you would get better results?

Yet this is the same ketchup. It's just that one sounds more appealing than the other. If you want to be an ordinary bottle of ketchup, chances are you are going to be situated at the back of the shelf at the store. The other ketchup will stand out. Yet your ketchup may even be better than the ketchup at the front. But no one will know it because you'll be stuck at the back of the line.

Do you think it doesn't matter what you say about yourself? Are you the type of person who is going to say that you don't need to market yourself because you will allow your deeds and talent to speak for themselves? You are in for a rude awakening. And you are only saying this because you lack the confidence to try to put yourself out there and state your brilliance. You are afraid of rejection.

Not long ago, someone sent a manuscript to one of the largest publishing houses in New York, just on a lark. A month later, they got a standard rejection slip. This would have gone unnoticed, except it was a publicized experiment. The manuscript that was sent was "The Old Man and the Sea" by Ernest Hemingway.

I think most people will agree that Ernest Hemingway was a pretty talented writer who knew what he was doing when it came to stringing some words together. But an ordinary manuscript, an ordinary bottle of ketchup, an ordinary potential employee, an ordinary man or ordinary woman is just not going to stand out in today's competitive and edgy world.

You have to have confidence in order to sell yourself and your ideas in today's world. And once you have confidence, others will automatically see it and be drawn to you.

Follow the tips given in this book, especially the last chapter, and start becoming a more confident person today. The world truly is at your fingertips. You just have to have the confidence to reach out and touch it.

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