

# How to Develop Self-Esteem?



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# Self

The "self" consists of a person's conscious and unconscious aspects, their personality, cognitions/thoughts and feelings

The term self includes both the actor who thinks ("I am thinking") and the object of thinking ("about me")

# Self-Esteem

- According to William James, self-esteem is **the feeling of self-worth that is derived from the ratio of our actual successes to our pretensions**
- By pretensions, he meant our estimation of our potential successes (informed by our values, goals, and aspirations)



We can conclude that self-esteem implies that we base our sense of self-worth on a comparison of how we are and how we aspire to be in future

- **Development of self-esteem:**

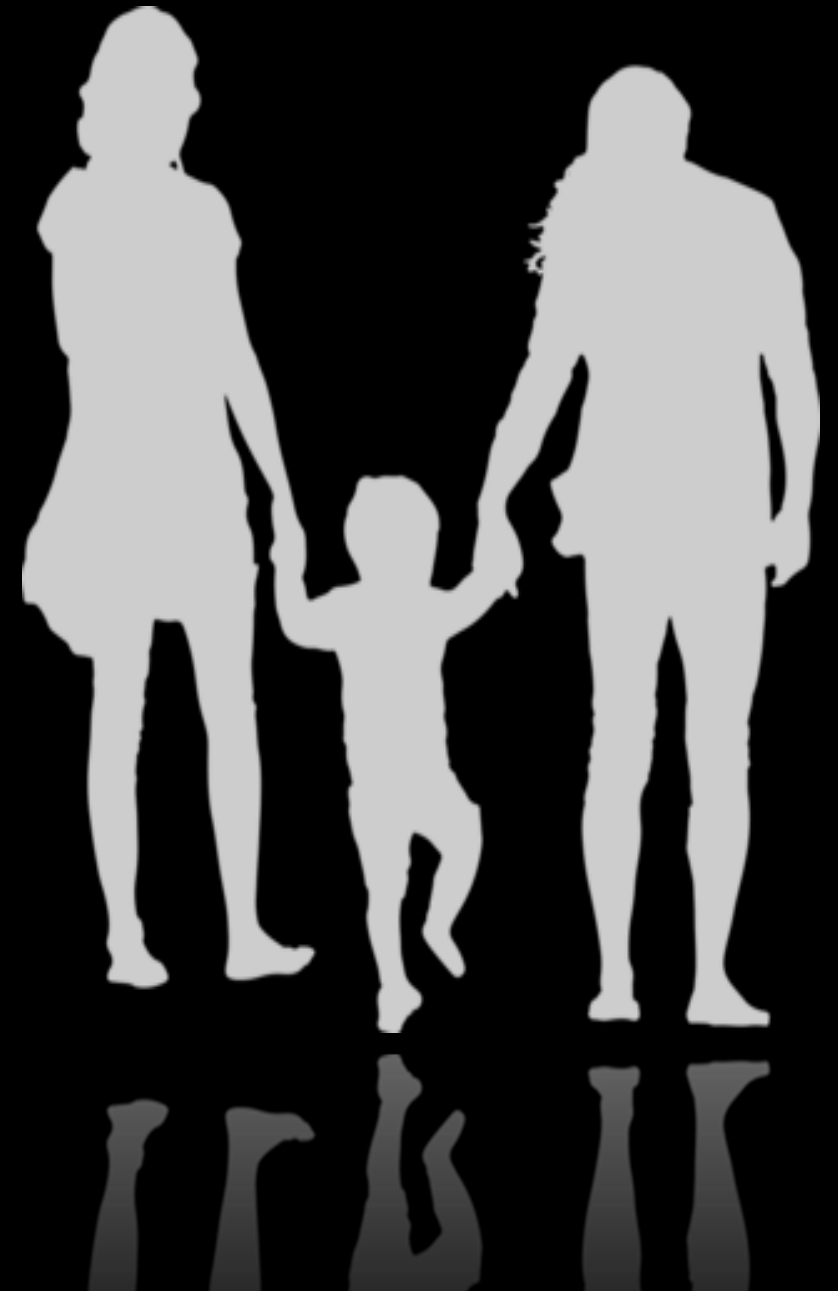
- Children whose parents are accepting of their strengths and limitations and set explicit high, but attainable standards develop high self-esteem
- A consistent authoritative parenting style in which children are treated with warmth and respect and given opportunities to discuss directives and rules about good conduct
- Children whose parents are inconsistent, permissive, strictly authoritarian, rejecting, or abusive develop low self-esteem
- Parental example and role modelling will influence the development of self-esteem, and have a greater impact than the verbal advice parents give their children

# 10 WAYS TO BOOST SELF-ESTEEM



- *Development of self-esteem:*

- Parents who cope with life challenges by using an active problem-solving coping style are more likely, through their example, to help their children develop high self-esteem
- An avoidant parental coping style is associated with the development of low-esteem in children
- Also influenced by wider social factors (eg: socioeconomic status)
- Higher socioeconomic status is associated with high self-esteem and poverty is associated with lower self-esteem



• *Correlates of self-esteem with:*

➤ High self-esteem:



Positive affectivity

Personal autonomy

Greater self-knowledge

High achievement

Managing stress well

Being accepted and approved by others

Coping with criticism and negative feedback

Setting appropriate goals to achieve personal commitments

Good personal, social, educational and occupation achievement across lifespan

Showing low levels of self-criticism and criticism of others

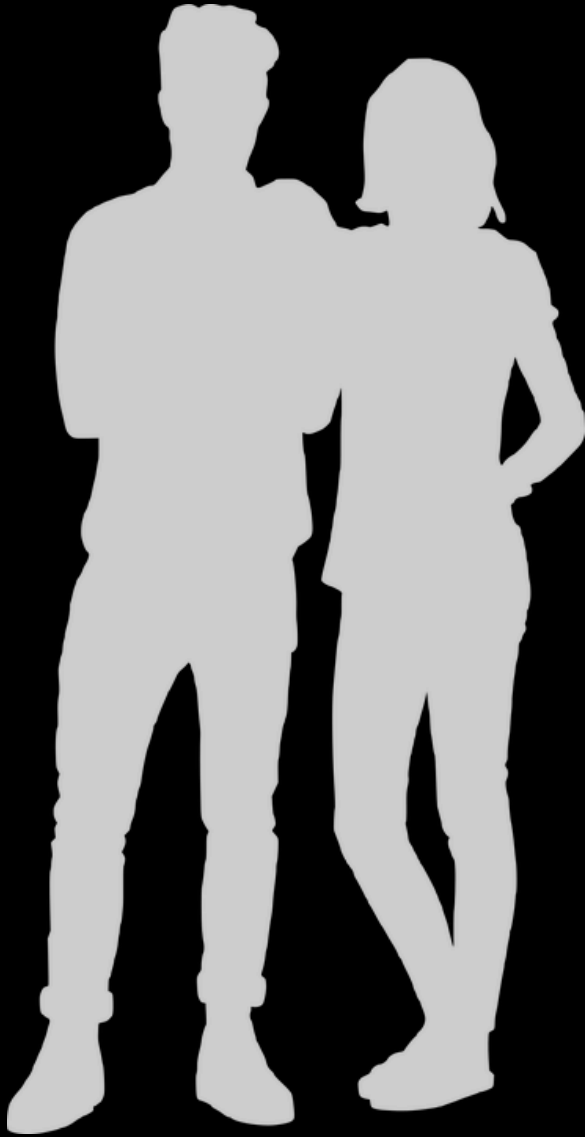
- *Correlates of self-esteem with:*

- Low self-esteem:



Concerned with self-protection -  
avoiding failure, humiliation /  
rejection

Aim to find out about their  
shortcomings so that they can  
remember these to avoid failure



- ***Gender Differences in self-esteem:***

- Gentile et al. (2010):

- A meta-analysis of data from 115 studies involving over 32,000 participants
- Men scored significantly higher than women on physical appearance, athletics, and personal self-esteem
- Women scored higher than men on conduct and moral/ethical self-esteem
- Men and women did not differ in academic, social acceptance/family-related self-esteem



## • *How to improve self-esteem:*

### **Make two lists: one of your strengths and one of your achievements**

- Try to get a supportive friend or relative to help you with these lists, as people with low self-esteem are not usually in the most objective frame of mind
- Keep the lists in a safe place and read through them every morning

### **Think positively about yourself**

- Remind yourself that, despite your problems, you are a unique, special, and valuable person, and that you deserve to feel good about yourself
- You are, after all, a miracle of consciousness, the consciousness of the universe
- Identify and challenge any negative thoughts about yourself such as 'I am loser', 'I never do anything right', or 'No one really likes me'

### **Wear clean clothes that make you feel good about yourself**

- All things being equal, wear an ironed shirt rather than a crumpled T-shirt... you get the idea

### **Eat good food as part of a healthy, balanced diet**

- Make meals a special time, even if you are eating alone
- Turn off the TV, set the table, light a candle, and take a moment to feel grateful

## • *How to improve self-esteem:*

### **Don't compare yourself to others**

- It can be tempting to measure your own worth against other people
- *So what* if your friend is awesome at tennis?
- You just need to figure out what *your* niche is
- Everyone is great at *something*
- What are *your* strengths?

### **Don't beat yourself up when you make a mistake**

- Everyone on planet earth makes mistakes – it's basic human nature
- Why should you be any different?
- When you mess up, don't stress; just learn from it and move on

### **Focus on the things you can change**

- There's no point wasting all your energy thinking about things that you can't change
- Instead, think about some of the things that are in your power to control and see what you can do about those

## • *How to improve self-esteem:*

### **Celebrate the small stuff**

- Celebrating the small victories is a great and completely legitimate way to feel better about yourself

### **Surround yourself with supportive people**

- Don't hang around people who bring you down
- Find people who make you feel good about yourself and avoid those who tend to trigger your negative thinking

### **Be helpful and considerate**

- Being of help to someone is a great way to boost their mood, but you might also find that you feel better about yourself after you do something particularly excellent for someone else

