

Workshop 6: Confidence Building

Increasing your confidence level will help you gain more control over your life. The following information will help you learn how to change situations, which will leave you feeling more self-confident. This won't be easy because you first need some confidence in order to take courage to work on your confidence! But you will see that it is possible to break out of this cycle.

What is confidence?

Confidence is about feeling positive about yourself, being self-assured, secure, assertive and strong. Confidence involves being able to handle or feel comfortable in a situation - in other words, feeling in control.

Why do we lose confidence?

Some people are naturally shy and some may never been confident; but this doesn't mean they can't be.

Others may have once been confident but due to something that has happened in their lives their confidence level has dropped, such as moving house, separating from a partner, changing jobs or, as in for many of us, having chronic pain.

Sometimes losing confidence is not due to one big life event but lots of small events and sometimes you may not even be aware that you have no confidence, because you have not been thinking about it, or been affected by it. In this situation you are more likely to notice that you feel generally unhappy, you worry more, or you have no patience with people around you. You may not even see this, it may be someone else in your family, or friends, who notices that you are not really 'yourself' and they may point this out to you.

Try the next exercise which should help you understand what confidence means to you.

Think about the following questions and answer them in a few words in relation to your own experiences:

What is Confidence?



What does a confident person look and behave like?

What could lower the confidence of a person?

What does a lack of confidence lead to?

What can improve someone's confidence?

What happens when a person's confidence improves?

What small goals can you set to help you build up your own confidence?

There are many things that can affect your confidence level. The following offers some examples of things which may have affected your confidence. You may find that none of these things have happened to you and you may wish to add your own. You may even find that all these things are happening to you at once and you may want help in resolving some issues.

The next exercise should give you some idea about what problems may be causing your low confidence. Think about how important these things are for you and how much they are affecting you.

Look at the following list - which are affecting you at present?
Give them a score:

1: Not bothering me at all

2: Not causing too much distress, you can easily cope.

3: Medium distress, you are coping but struggle at times.

4: High levels of distress, you need to do something about it.

 Unemployment or change of job	Score:
 Feeling unattractive, feeling underweight or overweight	Score:
 Grief after a death (loved one, friend, pet)	Score:
 Poor health (yours or someone else's)	Score:
 Financial difficulties	Score:
 Not being able to do the things I really enjoy	Score:
 Relationships (with friends, colleagues, family)	Score:



Add your own:

Your results may surprise you, or they may highlight for you things you already knew.

Use goal setting action planning and problem-solving to make changes or seek support if you're not sure where to start.

As you begin to work on the areas of concern you have listed, your confidence should start to increase and you will begin to feel that you are able to cope better with events that are happening in your life.

Remember, this will not happen overnight and small steps are best. It's always better to achieve one small thing than set yourself up to fail by doing too much.