



CONFIDENCE BUSTERS

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Confidence is often elusive especially when a lot of things seem to be going against you from all directions. It can be very exasperating to have to pick up the shards of one's confidence once it gets broken. Our closest friends and dearest loved ones may encourage us to pick up where we left off, but most often, the work is entirely left in our own hands. Recognizing the most common confidence busters can help us reconnect with our inner selves and move on with what we are meant to do.

One of the most common deterrents to attaining full self confidence is trauma. We may have prepared as much as we can to face whatever it is we have to face, but the memory of a painful experience might curtail us from going about our business. The old saying that goes, "Let bygones be bygones." can help us go on with life. Dwelling too much for too long on a particularly awful experience is never healthy. We only get needlessly dragged down and consequently fail to make the target. Why make ourselves suffer further by remembering a painful experience? We just need to make the first step that will lead us farther away from the trauma, and we might already have taken the single most important step by doing so. Unless we learn to put the past behind us, we will be burdened with too much emotional garbage to contend with. Too much baggage breaks the back, you know.

Another wet blanket to attaining confidence is the people we associate with. Let us ask ourselves if the people we live our lives with have a great sense of character to help us with our continuous growth—whether on a personal or a career level. If we live with terribly pessimistic people who don't seem to see the good in us at all, chances are great that we won't be confident enough to face the world. A best friend who truthfully tells us our weaknesses is helpful, but one who always finds fault in us is not worth keeping. Sometimes, negative inputs can be a way of making us see the light, but too much of it can be damaging to our self-confidence. Child psychologists have studied how positive affirmations help children get self-confidence. If it works for kids, it would also most likely help adults, too. But, of course, false affirmation is not advisable, as it builds faulty self esteem which can eventually lead to superiority complex.

Perhaps the secret to building self-confidence and confidence in others is to find the right balance between the positive and the negative, the yin and yang of things. Too much of anything is destructive, and this also includes confidence.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are other confidence busters that you know of or have personally experienced? Why have they been confidence busters for you?
2. Why is the role of a best friend extremely important in confidence building?
3. When is telling the truth about somebody constructive? When does it become destructive?
4. Who do you think has more confidence, the critic or the one being criticized? Explain your answer.
5. Why is confidence an important aspect of personality?