

# Understanding the Difference Between Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

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People often confuse these two terms. Many assume they're simply just two different words for the same thing, but this isn't true. You can have a lot of self-esteem and minimal self-confidence. The opposite is also true.

**Having both is important.** You'll be more successful, happier in general, and happier with yourself if you can cultivate both qualities.

**See how self-confidence and self-esteem are two different things:**

**1. Self-confidence is situation specific.** You can have a lot of self-confidence regarding your ability to do math, host a great party, or to play basketball. You can simultaneously have zero self-confidence in your ability to cook or sing.

- Self-confidence is the amount of trust you have in yourself to do a particular task well.

**2. Self-esteem is general impression you have of yourself.** Self-esteem is a form of self-love. It's how pleased you are with yourself in general. You can have a lot of self-confidence and very little self-esteem. The opposite can also be true.

**3. Self-confidence is easier to build.** Self-confidence is the result of preparation and success. For example, if you prepare well for an exam, you'll have confidence in your ability to do well on that exam. **When you have a history of doing well at something, you'll develop self-confidence in that area.**

4. **Self-esteem can't be built with achievements, but self-confidence can.** A wall full of trophies and awards can really boost your self-confidence. However, it may do little for your self-esteem. You can be great at something without valuing yourself.

Building self-confidence is work, but the work that needs to be done is quite clear. If you want to be confident at shooting free-throws, shoot 100 of them each day until you're consistently successful. Practice giving speeches until you're good at giving them and you'll develop self-confidence in that area of your life.

Learning to love yourself more will help you build self-esteem.

**Practice these techniques to build your self-esteem:**

1. **Identify your values and use them to guide your decisions.** List your values and refer back to your list often. Think about changes you can make to your life to live according to your values. Failing to adhere to your values is a leading cause of low self-esteem.
2. **Reject perfection.** If you're trying to be perfect, you're going to fail. If you consistently fail at living up to a standard, your self-esteem will suffer. Lower the bar to something achievable and **give yourself the chance to be pleased with yourself.**
3. **Volunteer.** Spend some of your time each week helping others that are less fortunate. This is a great way to show yourself that you're a kind and giving person. Find an organization that serves a cause that you feel empathy for.
4. **Manage your self-talk.** If you spend all day insulting yourself, it's tough to feel good about yourself. There's no way to permanently shut down your inner vocalizations, but you can manage them. **Stop yourself when you notice**

**negative self-talk and turn it to something positive.**

You can have one without the other. But it's much more powerful to have both than to only have one. **You can be wildly successful with just self-confidence, but your successes will never make you happy or satisfied.** Both work together synergistically to create a life experience that can't be duplicated any other way.

Build self-confidence in the areas that serve you. Build your self-esteem so you can love yourself.