

HOW TO WIN MORE IN LIFE



SELF-CONFIDENCE SECRETS



Introduction

Starting in the 1960s, the self-esteem movement in the USA and elsewhere began in earnest. The idea behind this educational movement is pretty straightforward. If you foster self-esteem in students, self-confidence will naturally follow. When people are more confident, they tend to excel better in life. This has been the accepted gospel in education policy for going on fifty years now.

The thinking is pretty straightforward. It's simply elegant, actually, since self-confidence involves one's attitude about one's ability to get things done. When people have a high opinion of themselves, confidence should naturally flow, right? Not quite.

It turns out that "hollow" self-esteem only tends to produce impostor syndrome and, worse yet, and entitlement mentality. Whatever achievements people get with this mindset will be quite spotty.

In fact, in many cases, they are unable to replicate their earlier success. They tend to do things right from time to time but not all the time. There is no consistent threshold of success and excellence.

It turns out that the real solution to consistent victory still involves self-confidence; however, this self-confidence must come from the right place. It cannot be stimulated into existence through self-esteem.

Instead, you need to build your self-confidence on the solid bedrock of competence. Let me spell it out for you C-O-M-P-E-T-E-N-C-E. Put simply, you need to be the best you can be in something. Anything. Find it. Do it.

Scale that upward spiral made possible by a feedback loop that you create. When you become competent in something, you become more confident. After all, you have shown to yourself that you can get things done. You can show up at the right time to produce the right things to achieve the right results with right people which then leads to the right outcomes.

This is not theory. This is not a guess. This is not something that just happened by random luck. This is something that you yourself made happen because you chose to be competent in something.

Once you see this play out, you become more confident. You start to believe that you can make things happen. What do you think happens next? That's right. The more confident you become, the more you do it and do it and do it.

This means that you do the things that you excel in different types of circumstances. You're able to overcome more challenges; you are able to solve more problems and you get better all around. When this happens, you become even more competent and, you guess it, even more confident.

So, this upward spiral process repeats itself over and over again. This is called a positive feedback loop. The more confident you become, the more confident you are, the more actions you take and the more opportunities you give yourself to get even better.

The bottom line is you need to start with competence. This fuels increasing levels of confidence. Competence is the linchpin to sustainable confidence.

Compare this to somebody who just got lucky. For whatever reason, somebody found themselves at the right time at the right place with the right people to produce the right results. So far, so good. That person racked up a victory for that day. Congratulations!

However, the next day, things simply did not line up properly. For whatever reason that this person can't quite put their finger on, things did not happen. The same thing happened the next day and the next day. Weeks turn into months, then what happens next?

That's right. There is no confidence there. Whatever confidence this person may have achieved because they got lucky or things just worked out that one day, is gone the next day or shortly thereafter.

Do you see how this works? Do you see the big picture? You need to build your self-confidence on competence because that's how you create an upward spiral system of positive feedback loops that enables you to become excellent.

In fact, you reach the point where you are so in-command of what you're doing that it doesn't really matter what you feel like. You can feel like a pile of crap the next day and still perform at a very high level.

People around you may be in a funk mood but it wouldn't matter things. Things may not line up. All sorts of accidents happen. All sorts of unforeseen situations break out but, guess what? You're still able to perform at a very high level.

That's the difference between competence and confidence that flows from feeling right at the right time. In other words, that's the difference between competence and simply getting lucky. You cannot afford to get lucky.

Another thing about competence is that it is objective. If you go through that process of building up your competence one inch at a time, one step at a time, one block at a time, it cannot be taken away from you.

This book uses this interplay between competence and self-confidence to help you develop unstoppable confidence that can help you scale and overcome any kind of difficulty or obstacle.

Let's Get Clear First!

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Before we get ahead of ourselves, let's just get one thing out of the way. This is a fairly common issue. People trip themselves up on this issue. I don't want you to read this book and make this assumption.

Please understand that there's a big difference between self-confidence and self-esteem. They are not one and the same. Do not confuse these two concepts.

The Essence of Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is your attitude and your belief in your ability to get things done. This impacts your estimate of how likely you will succeed. This also affects how you feel when things don't go right. If you put this all together, it is no surprise that your self-confidence plays a big role in whether you're going to try an activity over and over again until you succeed.

Self-esteem, on the other hand, is all about your opinion of your value as a person. That's all it is. It is your esteem or your estimation of your value as a person, who you are, what you're about, what your capabilities are and what your capacities may be.

Two totally different things. Your self-confidence is about your ability. It impacts whether you are going to try something and how hard you're going to try. It also affects how often you're going to keep trying until you achieve a breakthrough. Oftentimes, it determines whether you're going to try at all.

Again, these are not one and the same. Do not confuse them. A lot of people think that as long as they fix their self-esteem, self-confidence will flow. I'm telling you that is the fatal logical flow made by the self-esteem movement in the United States.

We have so many people running around with a very high estimate of their worth as human beings. This is a good thing. I am not going to deny them that. However, the problem is this is a "hollow"

assumption. They assume it coming in. It's kind of like a door prize. When they show up, they automatically put on the jacket labeled self-esteem. So far, so good, right?

Well, here's the problem. You can have a high view of yourself but that is no substitute for knowing the right thing at the right time with the right people to produce the right outcomes. Far from it.

You can think that you are the second coming of Albert Einstein but if you did not practice your quadratic equations and your calculus, you're going to flunk out on that test. This is not rocket science.

Sadly, a lot of people think that as long as they have self-esteem achieved through whatever means, they are going to get self-confident. They are going to be able to do things eventually. They have enough mental and emotional equipment to get things done.

Unfortunately, that has not been the case. Whatever success you may be able to achieve tends to be shallow, short-lived and unsustainable. You can't for the life of you achieve that same success the next day and the day after that. However, that's not good enough. As you probably already know, the world rewards sustainable ability to get things done.

The worst part of self-esteem is that it's subjective. I have value because I think I have value. I feel the right emotions. I feel good about myself. I can see myself doing all these things. I am somebody. That's great. That's awesome. It's definitely nice to hear, but you know what?

The world doesn't care about what you think. It couldn't care less about your feelings. What it pays attention to is what you do.

Can you do the job right, yes or no? Can you show up on time, yes or no? Can you do whatever it takes for however long it takes to achieve a certain result that needs minimal standards, yes or no? That's the level the world operates on. Everything else is noise.

Real Sustainable and Unshakeable Self-Esteem Must be Built on Object Reality

I've got some bad news for you. If you think that self-esteem is just something that somebody can give you because they say, "Try your very best", "I know you can do it", "You are special and don't you let anybody make you think otherwise".

Those are great words but the problem is if you buy into that hook, line and sinker, you develop hollow confidence. It's only a matter of time until that confidence starts to crumble like a brittle biscuit under the weight and pressure of reality.

Again, reality doesn't care about your feelings. Reality doesn't care how much time, effort and tears you put into something. When the test comes, you better come out on top. Otherwise, you fail.

That's all there is to it. It's black and white. Yes or no. Zeros and ones. It's a binary reality out there regardless of what other people tell you.

This is why real self-esteem must be based on competence. Competence is proven. Competence can be measured. Competence, most importantly, produces results.

The Problem with Modern Self-Esteem

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So, what is the problem with modern self-esteem? Why is it that a lot of people who have such high estimates of themselves tend to be mediocre?

In fact, psychologists have a term for one aspect of this personal overestimation. When it comes to our estimate of our ability to get things done and our general effectiveness, a lot of us suffer from the Dunning-Kruger effect. This is a cognitive bias that we have where we think we are superior in certain activities when it turns out from a purely objective test-based basis, we suck at them.

It is not unusual for people to share their opinions about weighty political and economic issues that they have absolutely no competence in. Whatever conclusion they come up with is obviously going to be defective and useless. However, that does not in any way prevent them from speaking up anyway.

The Dunning-Kruger effect doesn't just apply to online message boards, chat rooms and Facebook comments sections. It applies across the board. We tend to have a cognitive blind spot to the things that we suck at, but this is just a manifestation of the modern focus on exaggerated self-esteem.

In fact, a lot of us expect it to be some sort of door prize. It's not unusual for parents to say, "You are special, you are worthy, you are excellent" with absolutely no objective facts to back it up except, of course, with the kid's feelings. The lesson here is these parents are teaching their kids an unmistakable lesson. Your feelings stand in for reality.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that this is a very dangerous idea. Again, you have all the feelings in the world and you could feel strongly. You may even be driven by the very best emotions and motivations, but none of that would matter if you can't produce results.

I hate to state an obvious truth, but life doesn't reward you just for showing up. There are no participation prizes in life. You have to hit certain minimal standards. You have to win at a certain level. You have to produce certain results.

This creates a hollow self-esteem. This type of self-esteem is very brittle. It only takes even the slightest disappointment for one person's self-esteem house of cards to come crashing down. These people can't handle much of a challenge. If things get a bit tough, they're the first to pipe up and complain. They like to whine.

If you think that's rough, wait, it gets even worse. Simulated or fake self-esteem leads to an entitlement mentality. I'm sure you already know that life is not fair. I'm sure you've already gotten the memo that life can often be chaotic. You may have all the best-laid plans in the world, but the world just has a way of throwing those plans in the air.

You may have everything mapped out but, all of the sudden, something unforeseen happens. That's the way life is. It's chaotic. It's unpredictable, it's rough and it's unfair. In fact, it can be quite random.

Given this reality, the worst thing that you can do for yourself to assume an entitlement mentality. You show up and you expect things to be fair, easy, convenient and comfortable. What do you think you're setting up for yourself?

Again, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to see that you're setting yourself up for a life of frustration, discontent, unhappiness and a feeling that you are stuck in a world you did not create. You're not exactly setting yourself up for a comforting set of prospects.

The Real Foundation of Self-Confidence: COMPETENCE

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What is competence anyway? Competence is your ability to get things done right.

It doesn't matter what it is. It can be an intellectual job. It can be something that you do with your hands. It can also involve your work process, showing up on time, putting in the work, making sure that work meets minimal standards, knowing what to do when certain conditions arise and knowing how to overcome challenges. This is competence.

Now, I'm not talking about excellence here. I'm talking about competence. You're meeting a standard of quality and, most importantly, you're able to do this day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year.

You're able to stick to that level of competence over an extended period of time. It's not something that you do when you feel like it. You're not a very competent person when you are hot and cold.

Competence is all about stability and you also must be able to ensure that your skill sets in whatever area in life stays relevant. You don't hang onto old skill sets that may have been valuable twenty years ago.

Let's get one thing clear. In the Internet age, as well as in the mobile age, skill sets that were valuable twenty years ago are almost absolutely worthless today. Competence is all about staying abreast of technology and keeping up with what's in demand.

How Competence Boosts Self-Esteem

When you notice that you are able to do the right things at the right time to produce the right results with the right people on a consistent basis, one realization kicks in. It's as if a diamond bullet hits you right in the middle of the head. You realize that you're not all that bad. You can actually get things done.