

# 12 Tips to Improve Self- Esteem



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*Adolescence can be a vulnerable time for teens. They are very unsure of themselves, and they allow their peers to dictate how they should act. This book offers 13 ways to overcome these tendencies.*

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## Introduction

I'm sure you may have heard of the words 'self-esteem' and 'self-confidence' before, but do you really know what they mean? More importantly, do you have enough of each of them yourself to act in an assertive manner?

If you are an adolescent who struggles to assert yourself because of low self-esteem, this book is for you. In this book, you'll learn more about self-esteem, self-image, and self-confidence, and how to express them in real situations every day.

The word 'esteem' has to do with how you feel about something. In other words, esteem is about how valuable or worthy you think something is. So, self-esteem has to do with how much you value yourself or how worthy you feel. People with healthy levels of self-

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esteem know that they're worth a lot without being snobby or thinking they're better than their peers.

Self-confidence is related to self-esteem. But it is a little different. Self-confidence has to do with how confident or self-assured you feel in a new situation. If you generally feel that they you can take on a challenge and succeed, you're self-confident. However, if you feel intimidated or freak out when challenging situations present themselves, then you lack self-confidence and need a boost to make yourself feel better about yourself.

Self-image is one's conception of oneself and one's role. A person's self-image is the mental picture which depicts not only details that are available to outside observation, such as height, weight, and hair color, but also items that have been learned by that person

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about herself, from personal experience or by internalizing the opinions of others.

Now that we did some defining, it's time to get to work and outline some tips that you can develop to help improve your overall self-esteem and to assert yourself in everyday situations.

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### **Tip 1: Be Proud of Every Aspect of Yourself**

An adolescent always tends to struggle with her body image. You always want to be slimmer, more beautiful, tanned, dark haired, or something else. Whatever you don't have, you want.

It is harder for an adolescent girl to not only accept who she is but to be proud of it. And why wouldn't you do that. Each of you is unique. You have to celebrate that instead of trying to repress it.

You have to remember that you're beautiful just as you are. You don't need to wear certain clothes, make-up, and fix your hair like everyone else. You just have to relax and be who you are and show the world that you're the type of person who your peers want to know and hang around with.

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To be proud of yourself, you don't have to boast or think you're better than the next person. This is not the kind of pride that I am talking about here. That kind of pride can usually be destructive and people just won't want to hang around with you after a while.

What do I mean by pride is not being hypercritical of your unique physical traits. If you perceive you're a bit different in physical stature from others, don't put yourself down or engage in negative self-talk. To be proud of yourself, you should stand tall and accept who you are as a gift that is offered to others. And you should celebrate your uniqueness with whoever you meet.

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### Tip 2: Don't Follow Others

In order to assert yourself, it is essential that you never follow what others say or do. Instead, you must follow your own values and beliefs. You must be proud of who you are and not be afraid to show who you are and what you stand for in everyday situations.

When you simply follow what others are doing, you are not being yourself. You are simply being a clone. And who wants to hang around with a clone? Most people want to hang around people who are honest, forthright, and happy in their own skin, and not waste time mimicking the behaviours and attitudes of others.

To assert yourself, you must decide how you're going to act in real situations and, you must follow your own intuition or inner compass. If something doesn't feel right, don't do it. For instance, if one of your friends

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decides that she wants to smoke a cigarette during a party that you're both attending, and you hate smoking, don't be pressured to smoke. Instead, you should stand up for your values and assert who you are and not feel pressured to mimic the actions and attitudes of others.

Followers are usually too scared to assert themselves. They lack self-confidence and have very little self-esteem. They don't want to stand out and they want to blend in with the crowd. By blending in with the crowd, however, they're losing a sense of who they truly are. And why would you really want to do that?

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### Tip 3: Celebrate Your Strengths

You all have strengths—things that set you apart from others and that you should celebrate and assert in everyday situations. All you have to do is to accept them and assert them.

It takes a lot of courage to celebrate your strengths. This is especially the case because many times the things that you see as strengths may be viewed as weaknesses by your peers.

For instance, you may feel that compassion and kindness are your strengths. However, your friends and peers may feel that when you're kind, you're wimpy and not cool. If this is the case, you may choose not to hang around such people or you may want to assert your strengths anyway and not pay attention to their reactions. You don't have to give in to another

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person's idea or view of what should be right for you just to fit in.

So, take stock of your strengths and celebrate them in everyday situations. Not only will you be asserting yourself but you'll feel great about yourself and so will your true friends.

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### Tip 4: Assert Yourself

It's seems easier to just follow what your peers are doing. You want to belong and you don't want to make waves. Therefore, it is easier to be a follower, even if it means not living your own life and not asserting who you are.

Each of you is responsible for what you say and do to others. Each of you must make yourselves visible and open to responding honestly and authentically in situations. You must assert who you are and not be afraid to assert who you are. That is what makes you unique and different. And your real friends will want you to be unique when you're hanging around them.

Some of you are afraid of being truly yourselves because you think that your peers will try and take advantage of you or will tease you. The truth is if your peers are doing that to you, it is important for you to

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get new friends and peers. Your true friends will want to know who you truly are. They will want you to assert yourself, and they'll even encourage you to do so. But friends who always want you to follow them aren't really your friends. They simply are individuals who are uncertain of themselves, and they're passing these fears and vulnerabilities onto you so that you could be as weak as they are.

So, assert yourself whenever you can. You'll be glad that you did and your true friends will still be with you.

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### **Tip 5: Leave Your Mark in Everyday Situations**

Many of you just want to fade into the background. If someone asks for your opinion, you just slink to the background, where it is safe and no one will ask questions. But there is a huge price to pay when you do that. You lose a sense of who you truly are in everyday situations. And that is a real travesty.

You must leave your unique mark on situations by being who you truly are. If you don't agree with something, you should let your peers know or remove yourself from the situation. If something makes you feel uncomfortable, you should not do it. And you should make sure that you let your peers know that this is making you feel uncomfortable.

So, the next time you don't feel comfortable being with a crowd of peers, or doing something that they are doing, assert yourself. Make your mark and know

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that you're not being a clone but are making a difference in the world, one assertion at a time.

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### **Tip #6: Stop Putting Yourself Down**

Adolescence is a time of putting yourself down. You can do this in many different ways. One way that you put yourself down is by thinking negative thoughts about yourself. These negative thoughts are usually hypercritical statements about many different aspects of yourself.

If you become used to focusing on your shortcomings all the time, you'll really ruin your self-esteem and you won't be able to assert yourself in any situation. What you must do if you catch yourself putting yourself down is to try and stop the negative self-talk right away.

One way of doing this is to write down all of the negative thoughts that you say to yourself over and over in your journal. For instance, here are a few negative statements that you may utter to yourself:

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*I am so stupid;*  
*I am so fat;*  
*I am so ugly;*  
*I am so inept;*  
*I am so shy and antisocial.*

Once you have an idea of these statements, rephrase them in positive ways, as I did in red below.

*I am so stupid.*  
*I learn from my mistakes*

*I am so fat.*  
*I am naturally chunky, and I love it.*

*I am so ugly.*  
*I am beautiful just as I am.*

*I am so inept.*  
*I am okay just as I am.*

*I am so shy and antisocial.*  
*I can talk to one person at a time.*

*Once you have these statements down in your journal, choose one to practise for a two week period. You'll feel much more assertive as a result.*

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### **Tip #7: Don't Let Anyone Put You Down**

It is important that you don't allow any of your friends or peers put you down. First of all, you don't deserve that. And second if you allow others to put you down, you'll become a doormat and doormats are usually abused over and over again. This can drastically undermine your self-esteem over time.

So, take the time to build enriching friendships with others. If you come across a person who keeps putting you down all the time, make sure that you tell them in no uncertain terms not to do that in the future. If they continue to put you down, you must end the friendship, because a true friend doesn't do that.

Instead, your true friends will want to lift you up. They'll want to really be with you every step of the way. And they'll want you to excel, and be the best that you can be. If a peer is intimidated by you or feels

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inept when (s)he is with you, it's time to end that friendship. The same holds if you don't feel right when you're with that person. You must always feel comfortable with your friends. But most of all, in order to assert yourselves you must NEVER allow others to put you down under any circumstances.

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### **Tip #8: Get Rid of Abusive Friends**

Abusive friends are always trying to undermine you. They're always trying to outsmart you and to put you down. They're always trying to say nasty things about you and to drain you dry and make you feel bad about yourself.

The important to remember is that you don't deserve to have friends who abuse you. Instead, you must find friends who love you, support you, respect you, and celebrate you for who you truly are. Only in this way can you continue to feel good about yourself in everyday situations.

So, don't waste your time with people and peers who don't have your best interest in mind. Instead, find friends who will love you and who will put you up on a pedestal, because that is where you belong. You don't belong in the dungeon with the abusers of this world.

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Peers who put you down don't belong with you. They shouldn't be considered your friends because they're not your friends. They're fiends. And fiends are not friends. Make sure you know the difference between a friend and fiend. Your self-esteem depends on it.

So, it may be time to revamp your friendships to make sure that you have friends who really care about you.

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### **Tip #9: Act Self-Assured**

It's not easy to act as if you're self-assured when you're an adolescent. There are so many things that take you away from feeling self-assured, such as peer pressure, vulnerabilities, and your own undeveloped self-esteem.

But, the good news is that you CAN act in a self-assured manner. Many of your peers can read your body language when you feel threatened or when our self-esteem is at its lowest. And once they read that you feel vulnerable and not assertive, they may try to snatch any kind of self-confidence that you may have so they can level out the playing field. This can never be easy for any adolescent to bear and effectively handle.

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Here are a few tips to act in a self-assured manner, even in the most difficult situations.

1. Hold your head up high and act self-confident.
2. Know in your heart that you're just as good as the next person.
3. Don't let others put you down verbally or otherwise.
4. Know that you can be just as confident as the next person. All you need is a bit of effort.
5. Assert your views at all times.
6. Don't be a pushover – not ever.

By following these tips, you can act in a way that will show others that you have a lot of self-confidence.

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### **Tip #10: You're Great Just as You Are**

Adolescents can be plagued by vulnerable and negative feelings about themselves. It is important to realize that you don't have to take a back seat to any of your peers. You are truly great, just as you are. So, you don't have to worry or put yourself down in front of them.

Instead, you should hold your head up high and know that you're not only as good as your peers but you are great! You can excel at anything that you do and you can be that BEST person that your peers go to. Most of the difference is in your attitude. If your attitude is positive, you'll be positive. However, if your attitude is negative, you'll act in a negative manner.

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So, it is important to work on your attitude. You should try and create a positive attitude as much and as often as possible, and don't worry about anything else. How you treat yourself, and how you treat others is a perfect barometer for how much self-esteem you have.

If you treat yourself in a condescending manner, you'll be treated as such too because that kind of vulnerability will show loud and clear to your peers. However, if you treat yourself confidently, and you don't allow others to undermine you or what you stand for, your peers will also respect you.

So, the choice is yours, isn't it? Make sure that you assert yourself in everyday situations.

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### **Tip #11: Don't Compare Yourself to Others**

Comparing yourself to others is such a waste of time. Not only will it set you up for pain and defeat but you'll feel worse because you'll feel that you can't measure up to your peers.

It's sad, but adolescence is plagued with a feeling that everyone is so much better than you are. But this isn't true. In fact, you're just as good as everyone else because you're unique.

Thus, try not to compare yourself under any circumstances. Don't compare another person's weight, height, and looks to yours because no matter how you think about it, you'll always feel inferior. So for this reason, it is best for you not to engage in comparisons of any kind. Comparison usually opens up the possibility for self-criticism. It is difficult for

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adolescents to compare themselves to others objectively.

Instead of comparison, assert your own unique beauty in all situations. And just know in your heart and soul that you're a wonderful person, just as you are right this very minute.

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### **Tip #12: Do Something Nice for Yourself Every Day**

There is nothing more nourishing to your self-esteem than to take the time to honour yourself every day by doing something really nice for yourself. When you take time for you, you'll be very sure to celebrate yourself and who you stand for every day.

In order to do something nice for yourself every day, you must determine what you enjoy doing by yourself.

Here are a few things that you could try:

1. Sit and relax, reading a good book.
2. Take a nice long bubble bath.
3. Go out for a cup of java or latte.
4. Go out and see one of your favourite movies.
5. Take the time to just be....doing whatever you would like such as just lay low and do nothing.
6. Meditate for fifteen minutes, followed by a few minutes of yoga.

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You deserve to be happy. You deserve to take some much needed ME time every day. You deserve to just lay low and do what you need to do to make yourself feel better and more confident. And if that means taking ten or fifteen minutes to do the things that you enjoy, then so be it.

Whatever you choose to do, have fun, and remember this is YOUR time. Do not let anyone interfere with this time. Just relax and take an hour or so JUST FOR YOU. Because you are worth it!

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### Conclusion

By incorporating these tips into your daily life, you'll be taking positive steps to enjoy your life and time. But most of all, you'll be building your self-esteem. You'll be celebrating who you are and you'll not be putting your self-esteem on the line. Instead, you'll be improving your self-esteem with every action that you take.

*As you say goodbye for now, this is my prayer for you:*

*May you develop a sense of who you truly are.*

*May you be enriched by who you truly are and never look back.*

*May you have the courage to be who you are, without worrying what others think.*

*AND*

*May you never be plagued by self-doubt but always know that you are great, just as you are.*

*Amen.*

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