

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Self-Esteem & Confidence

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Self-esteem is about how we appreciate, value and perceive ourselves. Throughout our life experiences and influences, our self-esteem develops and shapes the way in which we believe in ourselves and our abilities - this is also known as confidence.

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What is Self-Esteem & Confidence?

When we are talking about self-esteem, we often discuss it from two dimensions, self-competence, and self-liking. The concept of self-competence is referring to the overall positive or negative orientation toward oneself as a source of power and efficacy. Self-competence is closely related to self-efficacy. While self-liking is the evaluative experience of oneself as a social object, a good or bad person. Both dimensions contribute largely to building global self-esteem.

Having positive self-esteem is essential and critical to our mental health.

High self-esteem can be related to feelings of:

- Empowerment
- A sense of achievement
- Accomplishment
- Happiness
- Security

Remember that feelings of low self-esteem and confidence are normal! Life events and situations that challenge us may lead to feelings of disappointment and limit our engagement in tasks we once used to enjoy in areas of productivity (academic achievements and work) and leisure (sport, socialising). You may feel as though you have lost faith in yourself and have a harder time reaching goals. It is important to find strategies that work for you, to increase your motivation and in turn, enhance your self-esteem and confidence.

Strategies to manage Self-Esteem & Confidence

The following strategies are aimed at improving self-esteem and confidence. Be mindful that this is not a “one strategy fits all” fix and you will need to take things one at a time and find what works for you. Devote time to adapt to changes and implement strategies within your daily routine.

- **Setting up small goals for yourselves** – Setting up small goals, such as “I will read for 30 minutes”, or “I will drink 7 cups of water today” is a great way to begin. We can improve our self-efficacy and build self-esteem by fulfilling small daily goals.
- **Noting down negative thoughts about ourselves and challenging them** – Note down the negative thoughts and challenge them to help us think positively and build self-esteem.
- **Build positive relationships** – Sometimes others’ opinions can largely affect our view of ourselves and affect our self-esteem. Building positive relationships with supportive people can help us build self-esteem. On the other hand, it is also important to practice boundary-setting and saying “no” to people that may harm your self-esteem.
- **Be kind to yourselves** – We all have the time when we may not achieve our goals. Learn to forgive and be kind to yourself and become better next time. Improving self-efficacy and self-esteem is a life-long process.
- **Take care of your emotions and body** – it is important to manage how we feel both emotionally and physically. By monitoring our status closely, we can figure out the sources of stress and take care of them one by one. Hence, we can feel better about ourselves and help build self-esteem.
- **Focus on something that you can change** – Attribution is a huge part of mental health. Blaming something that we have no control on will make us feel helpless. When we do not meet our expectations, we should focus on things that we can change so that we are improving and becoming better every time we try.
- **Accept mistakes and remember to forgive yourselves** – Not everyone is perfect, we all make mistakes sometimes. What is important is whether we can learn from those mistakes. Forgive yourself and do better next time.
- **Comparative thinking** – Comparative thinking helps us improve. However, sometimes it can also become something that is overwhelming and harms us. Journaling is a practice that can help you to become more aware of the way you think.
- **Social media** – Excessive use of social media can be a major source of stress and anxiety. If you are feeling overwhelmed or exhausted from social media, try giving it a break and quit social media for a while.

Self-Esteem & Confidence and my studies

Self-esteem and confidence are necessary for students to take risks in their learning and to bounce back after failure or adversity. Low self-esteem or a lack of confidence can leave students doubting their academic competence and ability to succeed. Furthermore, students can become hesitant to engage in learning or take the appropriate steps for academic growth.

University can be challenging, and it is difficult to adapt and succeed in an environment that demands individuals juggle a work-life balance measured by academic success. Despite this, it is important to prioritise your health and wellbeing to overcome challenges and maintain a high level of self-esteem and confidence.

Students are encouraged to practice the below strategies, to build and develop a healthy level of self-esteem and confidence, while managing their studies.

- **Get to know yourself:** Take notice of your experiences and how they impact your perception of yourself and your own abilities. Identify your strengths and accomplishments and relish in the small, positive contributions that you make.
- **Reprogram your thinking:** Practice positive self-talk and affirmations to prioritise kindness and generosity, not just to those around you but to yourself. Recognise and challenge yourself, focus on things that make you appreciate your value and contributions. Turn down thoughts that make you think negatively about yourself or your ability.
- **Make changes:** Be assertive and learn your wants and needs. Action these wants and needs through making appropriate and necessary changes to your life that will increase your self-esteem and confidence.
- **Create a positive space:** Surround yourself with positive influences who support and motivate you towards reaching your goals. Be cautious people who are critical and create a negative space. It is important to develop and maintain genuine social support.
- **Seek feedback and share with others:** Share your experiences with others and strive to uplift those around you. In turn, encouragement and feedback can be provided to you.

University Support

WSU resources:

You may find additional advice and tools in this WSU [article](#) about time management.

If you are experiencing barriers that may affect your study or you want support to optimise your study then the WSU [Counselling Service](#), [Disability Service](#), or [Student Welfare Service](#) may be able to help.

- **WSU [Counselling Service](#).**

Students can access free, short term, confidential counselling services. Face to face, Zoom or phone appointments can be made by telephoning 1300 668 370. Our office hours are Monday to Friday 9.00am - 4:30 pm. Alternatively, or email counselling@westernsydney.edu.au

- **WSU [Disability Service](#).**

The Disability Service is free to access with Disability Advisors assisting students to meet their full potential. If you have a diagnosed physical, psychological or medical condition that impacts on your studies, you may be eligible for an [Academic Integration Plan \(AIP\)](#), developed by the Disability Service. Contact the Disability Service on 1300 668 370, email disability@westernsydney.edu.au or make contact via [WesternNow](#).

- **WSU [Student Welfare Service](#).**

Academic, Personal and Financial Hardship, International Support and Accommodation: 1300 668 370 or via [WesternNow](#).

- **Multifaith [Chaplaincy](#)**

Multifaith Chaplaincy can provide confidential conversation and care, support for stress

management and anxiety with links to religious groups and faith communities. For more information, please call Daniel Jantos on 0402771543 or email d.jantos@westernsydney.edu.au.

- **WesternLife**

[WesternLife](#) - Join thousands of students at Your Virtual Community to share experiences, learn new things, connect with new friends, and engage with events or discussions that interest you!

- **Disruption to studies**

Consider applying for [Disruption to Studies](#) and [Requests for Extension](#) if you feel as though your studies have been significantly impacted.

- **Deferred Exam**

[Deferred Exam](#) – You can apply for a Deferred Exam no later than 5.00 pm on the second working day after your scheduled exam if you are unable to attend a final exam due to serious illness, misadventure or other exceptional circumstances beyond your control. Submit a [Student Form](#) and attach supporting documents online for application.

- **Withdraw Without Academic Penalty**

[Withdrawal Without Academic Penalty](#) is an option available after the Census Date of the teaching term provided that you meet eligibility.

- **Leave of absence**

A [Leave of Absence](#) is a temporary break from studying. Once you have completed one or more subjects in your enrolled program, you can apply for a Leave of Absence. A Leave of Absence can be taken as either six or twelve months. The maximum amount of leave you can take during your program is twelve months. Please note, you must submit your application before the relevant census date

If you are considering any of these options, please reach out to the counselling service for support and guidance. If you are an international student, please make sure you seek

advice particularly if you are considering withdrawing without penalty or taking a leave of absence as these may have [implications for your visa conditions](#).

Community Support

Community resources:

- **[Lifeline](#)**.

If you are really struggling during the night when completing assessments or feel most alone, contact [Lifeline](#) (24 hours crisis counselling) - **13 11 14** or, Lifeline SMS Counselling Service - between 6pm- Midnight you can text **0477 13 11 14** and somebody will text you back!

- **Mental Health Telephone Access Line**

[Mental Health Telephone Access Line](#) - 1800 011 511

This Mental Health Line is staffed by mental health professionals that can help and provide you advice about your needs and discuss referrals to local mental health services. It is available to everyone in NSW and operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **[MyCompass](#)**

This free online treatment program has been developed by the Black Dog Institute to help people better self-manage mild-to-moderate symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress.

- **Reach Out Australia**

[Reach Out Australia](#) provides resources, advice, and information for anyone wishing to improve their self-esteem. The website also contains tips and advice on wellbeing, and access to youth mental health resources.

- **Centre for Clinical Interventions**

Check out self-esteem information and worksheet for free on the [Centre for Clinical Interventions](#)

- **10 Affirmations to Boost Your Self-Esteem**

- **10 Sources of Low Self-Esteem**

- **15 Ways to Boost Your Confidence at College**

- **17 simple ways of Building Confidence and Self-Esteem**

- **Build Your Self-Esteem with These 3 Simple Exercises**

Resources

- [Podcasts](#)
- [Videos](#)
- [Apps](#)

Podcasts

'The Self-Esteem and Confidence Mindset'

This podcast provides episodes 5 days a week to boost confidence, self-esteem and personal growth.

<https://open.spotify.com/show/5jqhplSxHg4MDA6gsS1Lsh>

<https://podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/the-self-esteem-and-confidence-mindset/id1497438573>

'7 Habits of Highly Confident People and 7 Ways to Build Self Confidence'

This podcast episode talks about how highly confident people developed self-confidence and the best practices to keep them going.

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5X8f1Aqjs0MJplOs4LA5La>

<https://podcasts.apple.com/gb/podcast/7-habits-of-highly-confident-people-and-7-ways-to/id1450994021?i=1000527611576>

Videos

The skill of self confidence | Dr. Ivan Joseph | TEDxRyersonU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-HYZv6HzAs>

How to build your confidence -- and spark it in others | Brittany Packnett Cunningham

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5ZESpOAoIU>

How To Build Self-Esteem - The Triple Column Technique (CBT)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20hYOeGC7qc>

Apps

- **[Talk Campus](#)**: There is a 24/7 support app called TalkCampus, which is free and available to download on iOS devices and android devices. WSU students can connect and talk with other students about anything.
- **[Smiling Mind](#)**: Smiling Mind offers a free app to help you practice your daily meditation and mindfulness exercises from any device. There are dozens of exercises tailored to different demographics and desires. All the content and programs are free, which is the perfect apps for beginners to try mindfulness. Free and available on the app store and google play.

- **[Headspace](#)**: Learn to manage feelings and thoughts with the lifelong skill of everyday mindfulness, any time of the day. Free and available on the app store and google play.
- **[My Compass](#)**: myCompass is a free app that is available to download on iOS devices and android. Interactive self-help program designed to address mild to-moderate symptoms of stress, anxiety, and depression through personalised treatments delivered entirely online.
- **ThinkUp App ([iOS](#) / [Android](#))** : Free with in-app purchases. Users of ThinkUp's app can choose and record affirmations to listen to daily. Users can also listen to peaceful music while meditating.
- **Happier App ([iOS](#) / [Android](#))**: Free with in-app purchases. People who use this app can read inspiring quotes, keep a gratitude notebook, meditate daily, learn from expert videos, and interact with other app users.
- **CBT thought diary ([iOS](#) / [Android](#))**: Free with in-app purchases. This app helps you record what you thought each day, so you can reflect on how you choose to respond. The app hence helps you change any negative or destructive patterns that may be keeping you from achieving your goals.

Still struggling?

Asking for help is an important step in managing these feelings and realising your full potential!

If you are still struggling, reach out to the WSU counselling team for support and advice. If you prefer to seek support from a service outside of the university, it may be helpful to speak to your General Practitioner regarding a [Mental Health Care Plan](#) and referral to a psychologist, or you can speak to a counsellor or other health professional. Remember you are not alone and there will always be someone out there who is willing to stay with you through your hard times.

Please find the attached PDF document. ([insert hyperlink to PDF document summary page](#))

Resources:

[Very Well Mind – What is Self-Esteem?](#)

[What is Self-Esteem? A Psychologist Explains](#)

[What is Self-Efficacy Theory?](#)

[Two-dimensional self-esteem: theory and measurement](#)

[Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs](#)

[Raising Low Self-Esteem](#)

[The Importance of Healthy Self-Confidence in Students](#)

[Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence](#)

