



Self-worth – Characteristics

Characteristics and behaviours of low self-worth

People with low self-worth may feel a number of confusing emotions, or act in ways that seem out of character. Having an awareness of these characteristics may assist in identifying an issue with low self-worth and allow a person to take action to improve their situation.

Common characteristics of people with low self-worth may include the following:

- Self-criticism
- Self-blame
- Doubt
- Anxiety
- Frustration
- Sadness
- Hesitation

A self-worth issue may be revealed through behavioural actions such as:

- Preoccupation with other people's opinions
- An obsessive need to be perfect
- An inability to voice a unique opinion
- Being consistently apologetic
- Focusing on the negative
- Self-blame for any perceived 'wrong'
- An unwillingness to try anything because of a fear of failure
- Minimising positive feedback
- Attributing success to good luck, despite the evidence
- A general lack of confidence.



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Physical symptoms of low self-worth

There are some people with low self-worth who feel distinct sensations in their body when they're forced to deal with self-worth challenges. These may include:

- Feeling anxious
- Sweating
- Tightness in the chest
- A lump in the throat
- Fast heartbeat
- Feeling hot
- Feeling suffocated
- Fidgeting

While physical symptoms of low self-worth can be exacerbated by anxiety or stress, please note that some of these symptoms are indicative of serious physical conditions, so consult your healthcare professional to rule out other health concerns.

Statements of low self-worth

There are other indicators of low self-worth, including how people think and speak. The following statements may indicate low self-worth:

- My life experiences have taught me nothing
- My past never goes away
- Why bother looking after myself?
- I'm not good at anything
- I have no self-respect
- I'm not worthy of someone else's time



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- I have high expectations that will never be met
- I'm first in line to criticise myself
- I have no good qualities
- I can't handle things when I'm not in control
- I give up when I don't get what I need or want
- Nothing is possible
- Everyone else is better than me.

Negative behaviour, statements and physical symptoms are all key indicators to recognising low self-worth. When patterns of behaviour become ingrained and then normalised, it can be hard to find happiness. However, healthy self-worth is within reach when the characteristic behaviours of low self-worth are recognised. Once identified, a person is in a position to do something about it.

Characteristics and behaviours of healthy self-worth

A person with healthy self-worth knows their inherent value and worth. They are resilient, cope well with stress and don't let life get them down. Their behaviour is generally practical and they will have an open mind when confronting challenges. They face no different issues to anyone else, the difference is they function from a place of worthiness. Their thoughts and emotions work together to enable them to look after themselves and those around them.

People with healthy self-worth tend to be:

- Confident
- Honest
- Realistic but optimistic
- Generally cheerful
- Resilient.



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People with healthy self-worth display many positive behaviours:

- They have an appreciation for other people and themselves
- They have an ability to be creative and find solutions to troublesome situations
- They make empowered choices, but are flexible when needed
- They accept people for who they are, but will push themselves to be better
- They encourage loving and respectful relationships
- They know their values and don't compromise them
- They make themselves heard, but not at the expense of others
- They don't fear rejection
- They can separate feelings from words
- They don't fear their emotions
- They are accountable
- They know they can't change the past, but the present is theirs for the taking.

A person with healthy self-worth isn't immune from life's challenges, and they're still susceptible to mental health conditions. Even with healthy self-worth, a person may still feel low feelings from time to time. However, someone with healthy self-worth is better able to pick themselves up from a bad day. They are more resilient and their coping skills will allow them to press forward with life.

Where to get help

Always remember you are not alone. Your doctor or registered health professionals are there to help you.

Our online resource page also has a full list of organisations where you can get further information.
<http://mindshift.org.au/suggested-links/>.

Things to remember

Low self-worth can be characterised by a number of behaviours, thoughts and feelings. Recognising characteristics symptomatic of low self-worth is the first step to building healthy self-worth.



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In summary

Taking the time to learn the signs of low self-worth and what constitutes healthy self-worth is essential. In understanding how self-worth can manifest, a person is in a better position to improve their quality of life and start building self-worth. And while life challenges may still present themselves, a person with healthy self-worth is in a better position to confront them. Talking to your doctor is a good place to start for someone showing any symptoms of low self-worth.

Updates and Further information

For the latest updates and further information please visit www.mindshift.org.au

Our Mission

It is our mission to ensure that every person has access to the resources available to build healthy self worth, to have a positive sense of self and to find meaning in life.

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