



4 Common Causes of Low Confidence & How to Overcome Them

1. Other People's Lack of Positive Reinforcement & Support

It's natural to look to the world around you for acknowledgement and approval, seeking to get positive reinforcement as a way to feel good about yourself, who you are and what you're doing. This is particularly natural when we're young... looking to our parents, guardians, caregivers and extended family for indications that we are loved and supported. We naturally crave that for a sense of acceptance, belonging and safety. However, we don't always get what we need or want from other people, including when we're young. There may be a lack of positive reinforcement from the people we most want it from. We might consciously, or subconsciously, decide that this lack of positive feedback, love and support is because there's something wrong with us, and therefore seeds of self-doubt are planted in our mind. This can breed lack of confidence.

TIP: It's vitally important on your life journey to realize that most often people are simply caught up in their own world, their own needs, their own problems, their own desires, and as a result... they may not want to or be able to give you what you need. This is in no way a reflection on you, your value, your worth, your enoughness, your lovability, your talents, or your glorious self in any way! One big trap we fall into in life is taking what other people say and do personally, or what they don't say and don't do as the case may be! While you may not have received much-needed positive reinforcement at certain times in your life, which in turn affected your confidence, it's NEVER TOO LATE to fill that need now and to fill it yourself. You can resolve this in an empowered way and step into genuine confidence.

2. Other People's Negative Reinforcement & Bad Behavior

While lack of positive reinforcement and support from people in our life can be damaging to our confidence, what's often more harmful is the negative feedback and bad behavior of others. Whereas in the void of no support and no love your mind can make up assumptions about what that means (e.g. saying there must be something wrong with you), there is no assumption or interpretation needed when you outright hear, see, read or experience toxic feedback from other people directly to you, about you. This negativity might come from important figures in your life, such as those who raised you as a child, authority figures, close friends, family or partnerships. Or, it may even be negativity from people you don't know well at all, but where you have placed weight and value upon their opinion. Such negativity from others can seriously deflate confidence.

TIP: Other people's viewpoints are nothing more than a projection of their own inner world. When pain is within, pain is projected out. When hurt is within, hurt is projected out. When judgment and resistance is within, it comes out. When lack of love is within (for themselves or others), that is what gets projected out. When negative thoughts and feelings are within, this is often what spills over. What others say and do is NOT about you, irrespective of whether something you did or didn't do triggered them. The key is... their opinion is just that, opinion. Not fact. Not truth. And no amount of negativity and bad behavior they project at you can taint the truth and power of who you really are. You are more incredible than you even realize. And while it might seem important to you that other people see that about you in order for you to feel confident, it's actually far more important that YOU SEE IT in yourself first and foremost. This is one of the greatest life lessons we all learn.

3. Mistakes You've Made or Not Achieving the Results You Desired

When you make a mistake or don't achieve the result you desire, it's easy to make that into "evidence" that you're not good enough at something, or not good enough full stop. This is fuel for lack of confidence. Too often we use our external activities, tasks or results as ways to prove ourselves, validate our worth and show to the world (and ourselves!) that we're awesome. If that doesn't work out, then we're left feeling bad about ourselves and this deflates our confidence. We can end up living in a story that we create, about lacking confidence and feeling bad about ourselves. Our story is underpinned by "facts" which support it, evidence we've collected about all the mistakes we've made or things we tried that didn't work out.

TIP: Everyone makes mistakes. You can't be human and be alive on this planet and not make mistakes. If you were making no mistakes, then you'd be staying very small and safe, and living no life at all! Mistakes are essential, valuable and critical parts of your life journey. Shockingly - mistakes have nothing to do with your confidence at all! It's your story about mistakes that affects your confidence. You must allow yourself PERMISSION to make mistakes and to know that everyone does and it has nothing to do with how awesome you are. The same goes for not achieving results in any endeavor. The process of succeeding at anything means you learn, grow, test things, trial, learn, adjust, change direction, stop, start, fall over, get back up, go again, set new goals, change, achieve, "fail" at some things, and succeed at others. This is life. Not achieving a result you desire is not going to kick your confidence, but the story you tell yourself about it absolutely can. The good news is – you're in charge of the story you tell yourself!

4. Comparing Yourself to Other People

In many ways society encourages you to compare yourself to other people. The news, advertising, marketing, social media, magazines... are all counting on you to compare yourself to others. Even school systems, sporting culture, social networks... are built upon you “in competition” and “in comparison” to the people and world around you. Life can end up feeling like a rating system, a “keeping up with the joneses”, a measurement of you compared with norms. It’s a flawed system that accidentally evolved in society that only leads people to feel less than about themselves. Everyone knows this and yet only some people find their way beyond it, to freely live within this “system” (our society), ignoring all that comparison nonsense and feeling truly self-confident and awesome despite it.

Tip: The key to being free of comparison to other people, and therefore having your own confidence independent of the world around you, is to realize deeply that you cannot ever, ever, ever, in any way at all be compared to anyone else because NO ONE is like you! No one that has ever walked the face of this planet is like you, and no one ever will be. Your uniqueness, your personality, your gifts, your talents, your interests, your passions, your quirks, your inspirations, your intuition, your energy, your beautiful weirdness, your sensory experiences, your mind, your upbringing, your vision for the future, your SOUL... it is one unique, beautiful and timeless expression. Trying to compare that to someone else is like comparing a fish that swims to a bird that flies, or an apple to an orange, or night to day. They can all meld beautifully together and co-exist, but they cannot be compared. One is not better or worse than the other, comparison is pointless. When YOU stop comparing yourself, you free yourself of a major confidence kicker.