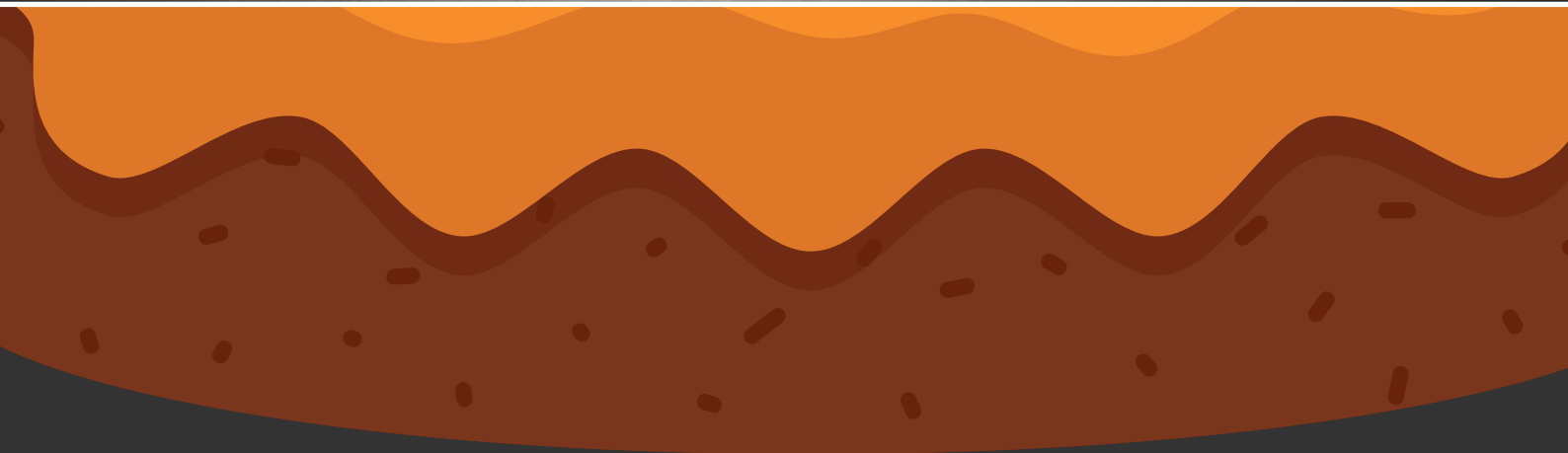




A 2 Layer Cake of **SELF CONFIDENCE**

5 Tips To Tranquillity, Being Comfy
In Your Own Skin



Self-Confidence:

It's A Not-So-Complicated 2 Layer Cake

Self-confidence is a fundamental pillar of success and fulfilment in all walks of life. It's why the topic is so vastly covered in philosophy, business, politics, sport, literary, prose and video.

'Self Confidence' is actually the title and theme of the first chapter in my first book, 'Ignite Your Potential', which is aligned with The Muladhara chakra. The red root chakra is associated with harmonising base survival instincts, fundamental logic, order, essential vitality and passion.

If you're not comfortable with your own skin, or can't love and be happy with yourself, then it's harder for the broader world to love and respect you. Our external world is a large mirror reflecting both who we are and what we're willing to accept.

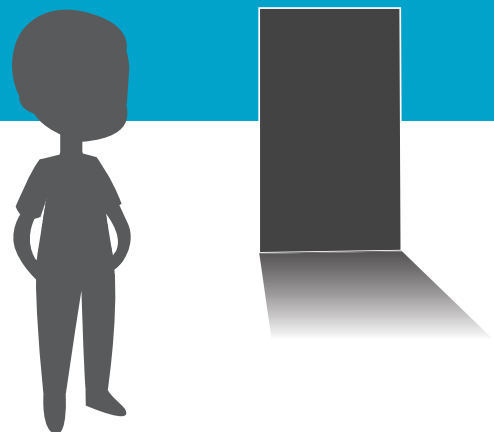
Like anyone, I've faced many challenges in life, some dating back right to childhood. My mother tells me I was really quite a happy and quiet child. She could leave me to my own devices where I'd silently and joyfully play with my toys or wonder at the world without fuss. Comfy in my own skin and nappies as it were.

We moved homes a lot when I was young. My father, a naval veteran for over 20 years, was frequently transferred from base to base and often away at sea for many months at a time. When I was four, we finally planted roots in Edinburgh after he was stationed at Rosyth dockyard. Being born in England yet raised in Scotland brings confrontations of the bullying kind. I was politely referred to as a 'Sassenach' and impolitely referred to as far worse for this perceived locational birth defect.

Having the hell kicked out of me in school or being used as a practice punchbag from an early age was a common — often daily — occurrence. It may be true that four-year-olds don't pack a Mike Tyson punch, yet to another very slight four-year-old, even rug rat whacks pack enough to do some damage. And we're not just talking physically here.

Maybe the bullying was one reason I became such a good sprinter in my youth because I didn't necessarily physically fight back. Although, I vaguely recall a single instance I allowed the frustration and anger to explode over into a single sucker punch. I thumped the main antagonist a mighty and unexpected blow. The retaliation was enough to create a gap for escape. Later that night, I'm pretty sure my mum received a call from the boy in question's mother asking that I should leave Murray alone! The cheek!

I've dealt with worse, but that will keep . . .



Verbal harassment, ostracism or silent treatment can be equally harmful, if not more so, than being smashed. It's a reason kids reach for such childish means to emphasise a point or as a juvenile power play. Did you know that silent treatment is a way to inflict pain without leaving any tangible, visible bruising or marks?

There's research showing the simple act of ostracism may activate the neural pathways and areas of the brain associated with physical pain. It's a reason silent treatment is a sinister weapon of choice for clinical sociopaths and narcissists. Kids may know no better. Adults, without an actual diagnosis of the psycho kind, may have low emotional intelligence or deep-seated personal devils (limiting beliefs or patterns from prior experiences) to draw upon as a reason. We'll get to that in just a moment.

I share these personal stories, experiences and perspectives because I believe it highlights the two most destructive and debilitating demons, the two layers, causing a breakdown or assault on self-confidence that must be dealt with:

External Behaviour;

Being told you're no good or being mistreated by others.

Internal Behaviour:

Our perceptions, choice of responses, negative self-talk or putting ourselves down.



**So, let's deal swiftly
with some ideas to
apply to both aspects
to help nip them in
the bud.**

The Antagonistic External Behaviours Destroying Self Confidence

There may well be times and situations we face in life where personal challenges and deep-seated demons make us want nothing more than to either withdraw into ourselves, feign avoidance or project hurt onto others in order to feel better about ourselves.

Unless you're a real-life Hannibal Lecter, any desire to inflict mental or physical pain onto another person, through harassment, ostracism or bullying of any kind, is completely unnecessary. To adopt or proactively take part in any of these strategies are indicators of a lack of self-confidence. If you find yourself slipping into such patterns, it's time to pull yourself into check. Seek help. Deal with it.

Just remember any hurt, in any form, being inflicted is being propelled onto another human being. A human being that is 'someone's' son or daughter. And, in the great wheel of life, perhaps that 'someone's' son or daughter might well turn out to be your own progeny one day. And so karmic patterns of crap behaviour may be perpetuated. Of course, you can play your part to break such cycles of vitriol by planting different seeds, setting better examples and laying foundations of positive karma.

Silence seems a fairly common strategy for disconnection amongst adults. There are times reflection and space may well be needed, but when indefinite silence is misused, it's an insidious tool both on the giving and receiving end. It's one I'd highly encourage to eliminate completely or at least try to avoid.

The moment you set yourself a pattern of avoidance and a habit of non-communication, you are setting behavioural wheels in motion that, left uncurbed, may well successfully toxify all areas of your life for many years to come.

Even the adage 'you've got to be cruel to be kind', a not-so-nice notion from the Shakespeare era, is completely outdated. Maybe there are times we have to be candid to be kind. Yes, candour which may upset another. Yet all communication can be delivered from the heart with good intent. Cruelty and kindness, like fear and love, are complete opposites and cannot co-exist. It takes a certain level of emotional intelligence and confidence respecting self and others to be kind.



**Tip: Kindness,
Show more of it!**

The Internal, Responses, Behaviours

Managing Self Confidence

On the flip side, if you ever find yourself on the receiving end of such treatment, it's important to remind yourself that it's not actually about you. Well, unless of course, you've triggered such retaliatory behaviour in the first place by acting nasty, toxic or hurtful; irrespective whether consciously or not.

Be open-minded and respectful with everyone, and should you find yourself in a conflict that begins to play upon your own self-worth or confidence, proactively seek to understand what you may have done that's been perceived so bad. Always be open to learning so that you may grow, however, you will never have control over another's actions. Keeping dignity and acceptance without judgement is one way to ensure such instances don't impact upon your self-respect, esteem or self-confidence. It really isn't about you.

No one has power over you. Ever. No matter how it seems. No one can make you feel a certain way. If you do relinquish this power by saying to someone 'you make me feel... (insert whatever buzz word that depicts your emotional roller coaster response here)' then simply go back to that person and ask them to kindly flip the switch that will prevent you from further feeling that way. You know you can't because there is no switch. If you feel a certain way, it's because on some level you're choosing it. What happens in life isn't important. It's always how you choose to respond.

To allow external actions or situations impact your own wellbeing, sometimes to the point of debilitation, again ties into being comfortable and confident in your own skin. The kindest, highest evolved, most loving people on the planet aren't even adored by everyone.

I'll say it again. It's never what happens that's important. It's how you choose to respond. You always have a choice of your response in life and, whatever you choose, says plenty to the world about who you are, your character and, of course, your own self-worth.

And what about those negative doubts and self-talk? I've read various studies suggesting that many people may have an inner dialogue of 20,000 words a day with three-quarters of them being self-berating or derogatory. Ask yourself this question: If you had a friend in life who dedicated three-quarters of their conversations towards berating you, how long would you really wish to keep them around as a trusted advisor? Self-reflection to seek personal improvement is both powerful and important. Flagellation and character assessment, beating your own brains out for every minor faction (I'm not smart enough, fit enough, cool enough, successful enough etc) is not.

The only person you should aim to be better than the day before is yourself. Strive to acknowledge your existing strengths and gifts regularly then continually seek areas you wish to improve. Learning and growing are lifelong processes. That's the strategy towards continual self-confidence and a healthy self-esteem.

**TIP – Emotional responses
and negative self-talk:
Show, react
and participate less.**

Long-Term Impacts And The Disruption To Self Confidence

You get the gist.

The scenarios and difficult periods in childhood all played havoc with my self-confidence or self-worth for a period. This included a stage for many months where I even stopped eating properly. I disposed of my lunches either by donating to the class gannets, throwing it away, or inventing ingenious ways of hiding the degradable edibles in various cupboards, nooks and crannies at home. Clearly, this last plan (born from a confused infant's brain) wasn't exactly mastermind. The rotten food, sniffed out by maternal instincts, brought mum into the fray. When she found out what was happening she made sure to correct this path by enforcing a 'go home or visit the local bakers to eat' tactic even if it meant adding excessive travel time without much play time to my day.

By going through many layers of my own self-reflection, growth and development, I can now identify some of these early childhood behaviours as completely self-destructive as an adult.

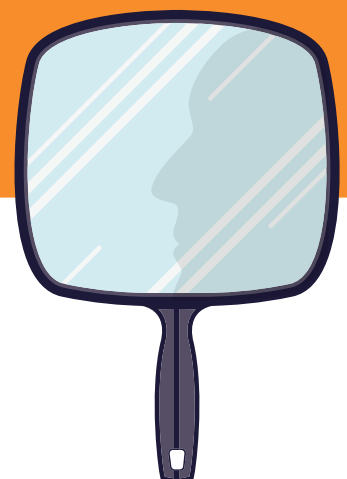
It's one reason why I'm passionate about working with people to encourage they find ways to healthily respect and love themselves. It's important to unlearn any patterns of behaviour, limitations or auto responses as early as possible. Always endeavour to leverage communication and self-worth tools for your current, not past, stage of life.

Compared to many, I didn't have the harshest childhood. That said, we all face challenges which impact and leave marks upon us. This is yet another reason why I enjoy working in the field of human potential, as I do believe everyone has the right to create a peaceful, respectful and beautiful life.

I may never know, neither will I assume to know, what a person may have endured that resulted in their preferred behaviours, habitual actions and reactions.

Whilst there may well be some clinically diagnosed psychopaths and narcissists out there, I don't believe it's anywhere near as many as modern day communication degeneration via social media would suggest.

Disconnection, trolling, stalking, judgements, hating and cyber bullying are common these days. Some people get jail time for physical assault. Some people get shares and popularity for social mental assault.



A wave of technology addiction has, I find, impacted on individual self-confidence and the ability to respect and accept others. There are millions of credible perspectives out there alluding, not so subtly, to the same thing. The Huffington Post has published some interesting eye-catching articles on the subject including hot topics like 'The Cut Off Culture' & 'Why Don't We Talk Anymore!'.

Add to this former tech execs like Chamath Palihapitiya (former VP of User Growth at Facebook) expressing regret for his part in 'building tools that destroy the social fabric of how society works.' In an interview with The Guardian, he went on to say, 'The short term, dopamine-driven feedback loops that we have created are destroying how society works.'

News feeds on social media certainly seem full of comparative content where the primary goal may well be that dopamine rush to gain strokes through external popularity. If you find your emotional state is symbiotically fluctuating or tied to your social media engagement then perhaps there's some work to be done on the underlying cause. True self-confidence means the most important 'like' you get each day is the one you can give yourself, facing yourself in the mirror. A bunch of random strangers 'liking' you is nothing compared to being able to authentically love yourself.

Perhaps truly confident people can help raise awareness that consciously applying emotional intelligence, considering kindness, tolerance, acceptance and love as standard daily practices are stepping stones on the healthy path to improving self-confidence.



Tip: Respect others and have more tolerance.

A Quick Consideration For Overall Self Confidence And Leadership

As an experienced professional now in the field of human development for more than 20 years in over 40 countries, I can relate the scenarios in this short e-book briefly to leadership and career success.

A key failure in business and leadership, in addition to life in general, is trying to please everyone. You can't. Give it up and simply focus on having integrity in all you do, being the best version of yourself. Always. No matter what. Then, whether people reciprocate or act otherwise, you've nothing to concern yourself with. That's self-confidence. That's confidence as a leader.

The moment you try and lead or inspire others with the underlying intention of trying to befriend or appease everyone, there will inevitably be some fallout.

TIP: Worry less about what others think.



Confidence As A Skill

As I mentioned in the opening, there are so many great books and talks from other thought leaders on the subject.

Dr Ivan Joseph, a successful soccer coach at Ryerson University delivers a great TEDx Talk on the subject in which he refers to self-confidence as a skill. "Without that skill we are useless." He continues, "When you lose sight or belief in yourself we are done for!"

Dr Joseph goes on to break down the concept of confidence as a skill like any other. Meaning it can be learnt. One quick take out tip from his talk includes repetition married with persistence.

TIP: Break down any task or challenge at hand and through repetition of an actual skill you can learn to achieve a path to overcome it. The shortfall to watch out for here being that so many people give up during the repetitive, practice process that often they give up at the first glimpses of failure or adversity. The idea of repetition is to get beyond both of those.

Five Classic Quotes on Self Confidence:

1

'The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it.'

J.M.Barrie

2

'Because one believes in oneself, one doesn't try to convince others. Because one is content with oneself, one doesn't need others' approval. Because one accepts oneself, the whole world accepts him or her'

Lao Tzu

3

'Confront the dark parts of yourself, and work to banish them with illumination and forgiveness. Your willingness to wrestle with your demons will cause your angels to sing.'

August Wilson

4

'The worst loneliness is to not be comfortable with yourself.'

Mark Twain

5

'Until you value yourself, you won't do anything with your time. Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it.'

M. Scott Peck



TIP: See confidence as a skill and surround yourself with people or perspectives that ignite it within you.



Take an honest self-assessment. Which of the traits are applicable to you and how can you take steps to make improvements?

Although there may well be external factors you allow to play on your confidence, ultimately confidence, happiness and fulfilment are an inside job. Break any obvious destructive patterns of behaviour. Put self-respecting boundaries in place with yourself and, where necessary, with others.

So concludes this e-book of self-confidence, and most importantly, skills and behaviours to adopt. We release a lot of knowledge and IP through my social channels so please get connected and share with your peers.

'Ignite Your Potential' is my first book. It is the first part of an intended behavioural science and personal development trilogy. 'Potential' is an extended online IP program that lives within my online academy in 'GROWTH'; the personal development catalogue.

Additionally, the full development academy targets professional development, leadership development and collaborative wisdom in addition to a depth of personal development skills of which self-confidence is a small yet powerful part.

Connect with us and contact us for a free exploratory conversation to see how we can help you achieve fulfilment and success in all facets of life.



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