

Romantic Workshop #4: SELF CONFIDENCE

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Self confidence is said to be the single most important personal trait that women look for in a man. Likewise, it should be the trait a reasonable man looks for in a woman. Self confidence is an unspoken statement saying that “I feel good about myself”, as well as “I have balance in my life”. These statements should exclude excessive ego and dominant behavior. Your self-esteem is the root of your self confidence and this exercise will guide both of you through ways to improve your self confidence.

Self-esteem is a mindset that evolves throughout a persons’ life. You gain self-esteem through successful endeavors and the ability to interact with others. Your abilities to get things done and communicate efficiently are the stepping stones for making the next task easier. When you pass an exam, win a footrace, get first chair in band, land a job, make a new friend, and fall in love, for examples, you gain self-esteem. Success at just about anything will bring you to a new level of self confidence.

So now you may be saying “I passed those exams, won that footrace, got first chair, landed a number of jobs, made plenty of friends and fell in love”. “I already have self-esteem and self confidence”. “What am I doing with this self confidence workshop exercise”? The answer to that is: you are at a specific level of self-esteem and confidence; a level that is serving you well (I hope). Your specific and individual personality has evolved along with your successes. Your mannerisms, style of speaking, sense of humor, favorite topics of conversation, how you dress, how you treat others, what is important to you and how you conduct your romantic life are even more important than your past successes. These are the keys to improving yourself and your relationship with your partner. They are the keys to a **new** level of self confidence.

Now you may ask “What can I do with these aspects of my life”? The answer is: and you have heard this before; **know yourself!** Know what is really important to you, actually **know** who you are and **be** that person. People who just plug along through life without a close look at his or her inner-self are missing out on that higher level of self-esteem. And that is what we are going to work on.

Day 1

This, being the first of five days in which you will be asked to find a quiet time for self-reflection; an explanation of the why and how we will do this exercise is in order. Anytime the word “you” is used for this particular exercise, the intent is to refer to both parties in your relationship. Why you are asked to **write** the conclusions of your self-reflection is so that you can solidify how you feel about the subject and know yourself better. The written conclusions can also then be shared with your partner. This will help both of you to understand each others’ mind more clearly.

During each of the five times you will be asked to spend time in self-reflection you should find a comfortable and quiet place to sit. If this place is not at a table or a desk you should have a notebook or even a magazine to serve as a writing surface. Be sure to have a pencil or pen at hand. Remember to try to “know yourself” as you reflect and write your answers to the items below.

1. Reflect on and write down what you think your “role” is in your relationship.
2. Reflect on and write down what you think your significant others’ “role” is in your relationship.
3. Reflect on and write down what you think your “role” in life is.

*We all try to balance what **needs** to be done and what we **want** to do. Use **partnership** to balance what needs to be done as evenly as possible between the two of you. If “what needs to be done” becomes lopsided and falls more heavily on one partner; it is likely that resentment may become a factor.*

4. Do you agree that **to love and be loved** is the best “role” for both of you?
5. Would your self-esteem grow if you strive and work toward a balanced partnership in terms of what needs to be done and effort exerted toward a more romantic relationship?

When finished you should share with each other what you have written today.

Discuss the differences and similarities of your answers.

*Discuss how you as a couple may **solidify** what you perceive to be your role in life.*

Day 2

1. Reflect on and write down your attitude toward self respect.
2. Reflect on and write down your attitude toward respect for your significant other.
3. Reflect on and write down your attitude toward respect for others.

*Respect is what most of us **expect** from others.*

4. Do you feel or show respect for others in the same way as your expectation of their respect for you?
5. Would your self-esteem grow if you improve your respect for yourself, your significant other and other people?
6. Reflect on and write down what you believe to be your significant others redeeming qualities, talents and strengths. Repeat this item for yourself. *When finished you should share with each other what you have written today.*

Discuss the differences and similarities of your answers.

Discuss how you as a couple can improve your self-respect, each partner's respect for the other and your respect for others.

Day 3

1. Reflect on and write down what is important to you in terms of your relationship with yourself. *While reflecting on this, ask yourself what sort of conflicts you have recently experienced internally. For example: have you kept silent about something when you really wanted to speak your voice? Would your self-esteem be improved if you resolve to be heard instead of keeping your silence?*
2. Reflect on and write down what is important to you in terms of your relationship with your life-partner. *Ask yourself if there are ways you feel you can improve your behavior, communication and treatment of your life-partner.*

3. Reflect on and write down what is important to you in terms of your relationship with people other than your life partner and your friends. *Could a more-warm attitude replace cold indifference in this respect? Would a resolution to practice a more-warm attitude toward strangers have an impact on your self-esteem?*

When finished you should share with each other what you have written.

Discuss the differences and similarities of your answers.

Discuss how you as a couple can improve your relationship and your relationships with other people.

Day 4

1. Reflect on and write down how you perceive your self-image *Do you consider yourself a worthy person in terms of your partner, your job or society in general? Are you a giver or taker? Are you a strong person when things are not going as well as you would like? Is your personality one that attracts people or one that chases people away? Do you feel you have a great deal of self-confidence, normal self-confidence or low self-confidence? Reflect on and write down **why** you answered the way you did on the items above. If you answered with less than normal self-confidence, ask yourself why and how you think you can improve it.*

2. Reflect on and write down how you think your spouse/life-partner perceives your image. *Are you a giving or selfish person in his/her eyes? Are you a strong person when the chips are down according to your partner? Does your partner purposely seek ways to spend more time with you? How would you rate your partner's perception of your self-confidence? Does your partner consider you a loyal and supportive person? Reflect on and write down **why** you answered the way you did on the items above.*

3. Reflect on and write down how you think other people perceive your image. *Do you think most people who have encountered you perceive your image in a way that matches your self-image?*

When finished you should share with each other what you have written.

Discuss the differences and similarities of your answers.

Discuss how you can assist each other to make improvements to your images of self and how others perceive your image.

Day 5

1. Reflect on and write down how you perceive your love for your significant other. *Think of love in terms of: intense affection, familiarity, shared interests, regard for his/her well-being, fierce loyalty and tender treatment.*

2. Reflect on and write down how you perceive your partner's love for you. *Use the same criteria as in #1 above to gauge how you answer this reflection.*

3. Reflect on and write down how you perceive your ability to love others (friends, family and strangers). *How do you qualify your ability to love these three groups in different ways? Do you feel that you cannot love strangers? Why?*

4. Reflect on and write down how you perceive your ability to love yourself. *Do you have affection for yourself? Are you indifferent to how you feel about yourself? Do you agree that to love another or others, you first must be able to love yourself?*

When finished you should share with each other what you have written.

Discuss the differences and similarities of your answers.

Discuss with each other why you may have an imperfect love for self, your partner and others. Discuss with each other how together you may improve your capacity for a more perfect love.

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