



Lesson Twenty Seven

Self-Authority: Believe in Yourself

Previously, in the last lesson, we looked at important strategies that help you like yourself. You'll like yourself even more when you can believe in yourself, which we'll explore more fully in this lesson.

Nobody but you can be the final authority on your life. If you don't step up in that role, someone else will try to fill it for you. Empower yourself to stake a claim over your own life.

The phrase, "Believe in yourself," is a common piece of advice. But, what does it really mean? Although part of it is self-confidence, there's a deeper meaning to be found and appreciated.

Believing in yourself is about self-awareness. Deep down, you know what you're able and unable to do. When you believe in yourself, others are unable to pressure you into doing anything you don't want to do.

On the other hand, no one can hold you back from doing something you know you can do.

Outside perspective is important, but nobody knows you like you know yourself. With regular introspection, you can build unshakable self-confidence.

The Delphic maxim "Know Thyself," inscribed for all posterity on the Temple of Apollo, speaks to this truth.

What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses? Only you can answer these questions. ***You're the only person in the world who truly knows your capabilities.*** Too often, people walk away from opportunities muttering “coulda,” “woulda,” “shoulda.”

The Importance of Self-Esteem

Self-esteem needs to be cultivated, just like a garden. Weeds, in the form of negative self-talk, can creep in at any time. ***High self-esteem can help you communicate better, make you more decisive, earn you the respect of others, and allow you to maintain your integrity.***

Increasing your self-esteem becomes an exercise in writing a self-fulfilling prophecy. As you build your confidence, you'll empower yourself to achieve more in your personal and professional lives.

Believe in Yourself

Some think of self-doubt as a monster, greedily sucking away their motivation. This outlook isn't particularly helpful because it sends signals to the subconscious that can strengthen self-doubt even more. Instead, be aware that self-doubt is a part of you that's vulnerable and in need of support.

Take these steps and increase your self-esteem starting now:

1. **Explore self-doubt.** Doubt is part of the human experience, just like joy, fear, and sorrow.
 - ***If you discover what's at the root of self-doubt and explore that, you may find that the doubt loosens its paralyzing grip.*** This will help you stop fighting with yourself, and you can move toward your goals.
 - The key is to get to the bottom of your insecurities and face your fears. Addressing your fears is easier if you itemize them first. Putting your fears down on paper puts them in perspective.
2. **Take stock of your fears.** Your fears will appear menacing when they're staring at you from within your own mental space.
 - Record your fears daily, in a journal, and watch the list shrink before your eyes.

3. **Pay attention to your thoughts.** Another way that you can cultivate self-confidence is to listen to your internal dialog.
 - Your fears can lurk in the words you use to describe yourself. Instead of saying, “I won’t be good at this,” try, “How can I make myself better?” out for size.
 - **Consider separating yourself from chronically negative people.** Cutting ties with toxic people is difficult, but do what’s best for you. Becoming assertive will allow you to help yourself and others.
4. **Relish your successes, but avoid living in the past.** When you’re feeling down, it’s easy to focus on your failures. Instead, recall your past successes. It’s okay to feel grateful for all that you have.
 - Maintaining an optimistic mindset will help you recognize opportunities when they arise.

Ultimately, believing in yourself means claiming self-authority. **Avoid letting others make decisions for you or limit your potential.** More often than not, these people are projecting their own self-doubts onto you. Focus on your goals and talents, and remember: you deserve success.

Get Your Mind on Your Side

Self-belief isn’t optional. It’s vital. Think of all the things you haven’t accomplished or tried because you didn’t have enough belief in yourself. Self-doubt will always creep in at times. That’s why it’s so important to have an excess of belief in yourself.

Create a reserve of self-belief and you really can accomplish nearly anything you can imagine. What would you do if you believed you could do essentially anything? How would your life be different? How would you feel?

If you need a little more faith in yourself, try these tips:

1. **Examine your beliefs.** You weren’t born with any limiting beliefs. You learned every single one of them. We all learn to limit ourselves unfairly. **Give yourself the credit you deserve.**
 - Think about the limiting beliefs you already have. Do what you can

to discard them. Ask yourself if this limiting belief is really legitimate. Where did it come from? What evidence do you have that it simply isn't true?

2. **Give yourself an unlimited number of opportunities to be successful.** It's easy to be filled with doubt if you think you only have once chance to get it right. Give yourself permission to "fail" as many times as necessary. Learn something from each attempt. This is a great way to build self-belief.
3. **Eliminate self-criticism.** As soon as self-doubt starts to invade your thoughts, ask yourself where that inner critic is coming from.
 - Are you channelling a negative experience from the past?
 - Is the source of this criticism credible? It rarely is.
 - It can be challenging to quiet your mind, but that doesn't mean you have to let it drag you down. Focus on positive self-talk.
4. **Trust and love yourself. *For one month, try being your best friend instead of your worst enemy.*** How do you treat your best friend or your children? Probably a lot better than you treat yourself. Give yourself the gift of kindness.
5. **Coach yourself.** Everyone needs a little support and encouragement. So when you find yourself struggling, consider what you would say to someone that you really believed in if they were feeling the same way you are. When self-doubt starts to creep in, take the time to coach yourself.
6. **Think about how you would like to act.** Think about how you would think and behave if you were full of self-confidence.
 - You can effectively borrow traits from others, too. Who are some of your heroes? Sometimes it easier to imagine others dealing with a situation than to imagine ourselves. ***See yourself acting the way your hero would act.***
7. **Remember all your past victories.** We've all accomplished some pretty impressive things, but we're quick to forget them. Grab a pen and some paper and list all the successes you've experienced in life, no matter how great or small.
 - If you need help, ask a trusted friend or family member. You might be surprised at what you hear.

Self-belief isn't about becoming arrogant or turning a blind-eye to one's flaws.

The belief you have in yourself needs to be focused on what you wish to become.

You can have weaknesses. Everyone does. But there is value in being relaxed about your weaknesses and working to strengthen them.

A strong belief in yourself is a sure ticket to living authentically. You can make it easier to believe in yourself by learning to love yourself inside and out – mind, body, and soul.

Your next few lessons of your journey will guide you toward a wonderful self-love. We'll start with loving your body.

Here's what you need to do today:

Think of a recent situation in which you acted in some way that maybe you just thought you should, or went along with the crowd against your beliefs.

Describe this situation in your journal. If you were acting strictly in accordance with your beliefs, how would you have acted differently?

How can you practice what you would like to do differently in similar situations in the future?