Building Confidence & Self Esteem
Icebreaker

I would like each of you to tell us your name and something that you are good at.
Definitions

- **Esteem** – Latin meaning to estimate, so self esteem is how you estimate yourself.

- **Self Confidence** – A feeling of trust in one’s abilities, qualities and judgement

When you have a healthy level of self esteem and confidence you become capable of meeting life’s challenges and acknowledge that you are worthy of happiness.

Ultimately you take responsibility for yourself
Freethink Activity
What is a Freethink?

• All group members contribute ideas
• Ideas will be recorded on the flipchart
• After contributions are made, the group are able to explore their answers
What are the characteristics of having a low self esteem or lack of confidence?
Characteristics

Social withdrawal
Anxiety and emotional turmoil
Lack of social skills
Depression or bouts of sadness
Eating disorders
Inability to accept compliments
Unable to show fairness to yourself
Accentuating the negative
Exaggerated concern about what you imagine others think
Self neglect
Treating yourself badly but NOT others
Worrying if you have treated others badly
Reluctance to take on challenges
Unable to trust your own opinion
Expect little out of life yourself
How Confident are You?

• Take our Quiz...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14-32</td>
<td><strong>You probably wish you had more self-confidence!</strong> Take a closer look at all the things you've achieved in your life. You may tend to focus more on what you don't have, and this takes time and attention away from recognizing and using your skills and talents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33-51</td>
<td><strong>Score Interpretation</strong>&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;You're doing an OK job of recognizing your skills, and believing in your abilities. But perhaps you're a little too hard on yourself, and this may stop you from getting the full benefit of your mastery experiences (see below).</td>
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<tr>
<td>52-70</td>
<td><strong>Excellent!</strong> You're doing a fabulous job of learning from every experience, and not allowing obstacles to affect the way you see yourself. But you need to nurture your self-confidence</td>
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What affects our self esteem and confidence?

Not having your basic needs adequately met if incapacitated or disabled

Having your feelings persistently ignored or denied

Being put down, ridiculed or humiliated

Being required to assume a “false self” in order to impress others or get their needs met

Being given the impression that your views or opinions are insignificant

Being taken for granted, ignored or rejected - especially by someone whom you like, love or respect

Making a mistake - especially one which we feel we should not have made

Doing something wrong, especially if the deed breaches our own moral code
We all have an inner critic – the little voice that questions, comments and scrutinises our every thought, action and word!

Let's take a moment to break down some of the areas when our inner critic can knock our esteem and confidence.

Physical appearance
Social events
Work/Education
Relationships
Mistakes and challenges

In the following exercise write down the words your inner critic would use in such circumstances.

When you look in the mirror
When speaking to a group
When applying for a job
When a friend lets you down
When you make a mistake
When meeting someone for the first time
<table>
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**Exercise 2**

Write a statement to challenge your inner critic

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Balanced well being

We all have basic requirements for well being........

To give and receive attention

To care for your body and mind

Meaning, purpose and goals

Creativity and stimulation

These basic requirements all rely on a well defined balance.

Anyone who has fallen prey to an emotional vampire or self absorbed pal knows the negativity of an imbalanced relationship.

Spending hours reading self help books whilst comfort eating on the sofa demonstrates an imbalance between body and mind.

Creativity and stimulation can become imbalanced when using addictive substances such as alcohol, nicotine, drugs.
Here are some tips to become more relaxed and positive:

- Slow down the speed to you think - as your mind relaxes your body will follow. This is especially good if you have difficulty sleeping.

- Breath through your nose and out through your mouth taking 10 deep even breaths if feeling up tight.

- Relax your shoulders, jaw and unclench your teeth, unfold arms and open fists - these are all stress related postures that turn to habits. These body poses can be read as aggressive or defensive.

- Sit up as straight as you can and keep your head up - when the body is slumped or slouching with the head facing down it sends a message to our brain that we are down, unwell or tired.

- Have a good stretch as if just waking up - fingers to toes!

- See if there is a funny side to things - use your humour to diffuse tension.

- Choose not to let a comment or situation to ruin your day.

- Count your blessings.
Strategies

Free yourself from 'shoulds'. Live your life on what feels right and possible for you. Rely on your own opinion of yourself.

Respect and take care of your own needs

Set realistic goals. Work step by step to develop achievable goals

Talk to yourself positively. Stop listening to your inner critic. Replace doubtful thoughts with self excepting thoughts

Test your reality. You may feel anxious about a project, but if you think about it you may have the ability and opportunity to accomplish something in it

Experience success. Feel good about it. Reward yourself with achievements

Take chances. Don’t be disappointed about making mistakes. Feel good about trying something new

Solve problems. Face them and identify ways to solve or cope with them

Practice making and implementing positive decisions. Trust yourself

Emphasise your strengths. Focus on what you can do. Stop putting yourself down

Develop your skills. Know what you can and can’t do
When your in the first blush of love you seem to go around with a smile on your face. Your body is light and relaxed. You are more prone to laughter and don’t seem to take things as seriously as usual. Saying no to people isn’t so hard as you are fully focused on your own needs, and you feel great!

Self esteem and confidence is all about loving and accepting yourself for the unique person you are.

No other person has your DNA, your fingerprints, your Iris, your personal experiences, memories, or quirky habits.

No person is perfect - that is exactly what makes us so interesting and individual.

Don’t take everything so seriously - laugh at yourself - laugh at life

Only say Yes if you mean it genuinely - “No” is an okay word and often the honest reply

Switch on your senses, dance to loud music, raid the perfume counter in a department store, go to the park for some fresh air and greenery, tell someone how important or loved they are, ask for or give someone a hug. It costs nothing, but can pay dividends

Smile more - eventually it can become a habit!

Read something that inspires you or watch an inspirational DVD/Video

Being as loving towards yourself as you would to another person brings balance to your life

Remember there is only one you
What did you hope to gain from the session?

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Has the session been of help?

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What was the most useful thing you have learnt?

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What was the least useful thing you have learnt?

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Have the Handouts been useful?

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Do you have any other comment you would like to make about the session?

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this form