

A Boost UP to Your Balanced Self



When I was a young teenager (or tweenie) I occasionally found precious moments of undisturbed solitude in my home's bathroom. I used to lie on the cool floor and quietly breathe. During one of those times when my heart and mind spoke to one another I saw myself in an ancient time, living in a temple complex of priestesses, women and girls. I was never able to ascertain which goddess this temple honored, but this was not the message I

needed to hear back then.

This complex had importance to the surrounding community through its spirituality, the produce grown on the land, and the wine producing grapes grown on its vines. The priestesses and inhabitants had many celebrations during the cyclical seasons, opening up its food stores to their community. Whenever those in need came to their doors, these people were lovingly fed. Only after they had their fill were they then asked by those living in the temple if they would do some small piece of work on their temple or on their land. The work was never a requirement to be fed, but given as an opportunity for the person(s) to feel their own self-worth. Those that refused the work were not ridiculed for their inaction, but were thanked just as enthusiastically as those that worked.

These scenes and knowledge of this time arrived in my mind in a burst and did not take long to receive and process. Was this an escapist reverie? A daydream?; A fantasy?; A parallel life?; An astral travel somewhere beyond?; A past life memory? It would have been nice to satisfy this question but again, it really wasn't important. This was not the message I needed to hear. The importance of the experience held a much deeper message.

I needed to hear that I could set out and accomplish whatever I wished. I needed to hear that I was in control of my own existence during this lifetime, not without responsibility,

but an existence that would enable me to honor myself for the blessed spiritual being in human form that I am and to honor others in kind. I needed an honest appraisal of my Self. I needed an injection of self-esteem. Strangely, this insightful vision brought me exactly what I needed. I am not saying that it wiped away all the "baggage" that was presented to me early in my life or that it precluded future "baggage" or lessons from showing up on my doorstep in the future. What I am saying is that a self-esteem foundation enabled me to have the right stuff to continue my present journey.

Self-esteem. What is it? What does it do for you? How does one obtain it? How do you instill positive self-esteem in children? How, as an adult, do you hold onto it?

What is a healthy self-esteem and how does it help you as a child or adult navigate through life? It enables you to meet the difficulties of life with confidence. Whether it's learning to walk your first steps, walk into your first classroom, or walk into that first job interview it gives you the coping skills to accomplish things. Even if it may be a shaky "I've got this!" it is still inside you. And when you truly achieve those things it gives you a sense of pride, a sense of mastery, and dare I say it, happiness! The more you successfully handle those challenges, the more confident you become. And if you are not so successful self-esteem can recognize "failure", recognize your different strengths and weaknesses, and give you the courage to carry on. You see yourself as a person with sound decision making judgment, confident that the decisions you make regarding your day, month, year, life will see you through. Healthy self-esteem gives you a sense of self to know who you are, what's important, and who's important in that complicated life of yours.

I am not saying that a healthy self-esteem has to be a perfect score card. No one is perfect; we are having that human experience, aren't we? What I am saying is that it gives you the ability to get yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again when mistakes are made or we are met with failure. Just like that infant that constantly falls on their rear until they can stand and walk.

Usually, your self-esteem begins to be built from very early childhood. Children are more aware and hear everything. Remember this. They record very nuance of a facial expression and body language and log that information as the truth. Why? Because young children don't know what a lie is and are incapable of telling one. (They may learn very quickly, but who did they learn that from?) You need to be aware that parents and guardians are the first people that are imprinting those children with their sense of self

and whatever is being conveyed is being accepted as truth. Words do hurt and hurtful words do a great deal of damage to how a child thinks about themselves. As children we also have to believe that we truly belong to this group called family, they need to feel connected to something greater than just themselves. Children's thoughts and feelings should be honored by giving uninterrupted time, really listened to, and honestly respected for those thoughts and feelings.

Children should be allowed to know what it feels like to make mistakes and to fail. Why? Because we all make mistakes and we all fail at times and we have to learn how to handle it! How can we learn what it feels like to accomplish something or to win if mistakes and failures are treated by our significant adults the same way? Children need to know the difference and know the healthy way to react to both. (The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat.) Don't give out unearned awards, they don't fool anyone. Children do have the greatest BS meters! Recognize and praise their successes. And support and have compassion for their mistakes. Encourage them to try their best because isn't that the most that any of us can do?

What do you do if you want to boost your self-esteem as an adult? Remember that words have power. Identify and stop negative self-talk and replace it with positive and hopeful statements. What to do about negative statements made by others? Don't take anything personally. Make a list of your strengths and give yourself credit for them! Don't beat yourself up if you make a mistake-everyone makes mistakes! Stop yourself from imagining negative outcome life scenarios. Change your thinking to give them positive outcomes. Stop comparing yourself to others- you are unique. Set realistic goals that are attainable. This all helps to create your positive self-image.

A healthy self-esteem is another component of your balanced self. Celebrate the wonderful person that you are!

With Gratitude,

Kai

