



Peace of Mind

The Counselor's Corner

A place for healing & growth

5 Tips for Healthy Self-Esteem



We are often critical of ourselves – how we look, how we sound, how we measure up in the world. Unfortunately, having a poor opinion of yourself invites others to treat you in ways they might not treat someone with a greater sense of worth. Here are a few tips to attaining and maintaining Healthy Self-Esteem

1. **Hold your head high.** Even if you are not feeling too keen on yourself, simply having good posture and maintaining eye contact with others gives a message that you are worthwhile and worthy of respect.
2. **Say “no” when you need to.** If you are afraid to say “no” but kick yourself or feel overwhelmed as soon as you say “yes” to something, you are setting yourself up for unkind self-thoughts (“I’m so weak”, “I’m such a pushover”). The next time someone asks you for something and you are not SURE that you want to say “yes”, buy yourself some time. If you cannot say “no” right away, get back with them (later that day, the next day) once you’ve thought about it. If they try to push you for an immediate response, explain that if they cannot wait for you to think about it, your response will have to be “no.”
3. **Take some time for “you”.** People who think highly of themselves respect that they need time to think; to pray; to pamper. Schedule time for you just as you schedule time for the dentist or work. You will be rejuvenated and feel better about yourself.
4. **Stop the “put-downs”.** Saying negative things about yourself – “I’m so stupid”, “I never win”, “I’m such a goof” –reinforces those negative beliefs in the innermost parts of your mind. There is an old adage that “you become what you think”. If that is true, you should be careful what you think!!
5. **Take back your power.** You may have someone in your life that puts you down, takes advantage of you, or treats you with disrespect. If so, and if you allow that to continue, you give all of your power to that person. Soon you find yourself giving up your power to them even when they are not around (worrying about them; thinking about them). Only you can stop and take back your power.

Feeling down? In a rut?

Take a new route to work

Go window-shopping

Read a poem

Count your blessings

Help out a friend in need

Create something!

Curl up with a good book

Smile whenever you are able

If you've been feeling down for more than a couple of weeks and nothing seems to help, you may have depression. Talk to your counselor or your doctor, There are effective treatments for depression; seek help soon!

For more about depression see page two



The Counselor's Corner... *A place for healing & growth*

The Counselor's Corner was founded by Deborah Legge, PhD CRC LMHC, a NYS Licensed Mental Health Counselor who has been in private practice for 15+ years and who has co-founded and managed other mental health organizations in Buffalo, for many years. **The Counselor's Corner** is a fast-growing group of independent mental health professionals, working to meet the counseling needs of the WNY community.

Whether you are looking for help with healing or growth, **The Counselor's Corner** will help to link you with the practitioner who best meets your needs. For more information, or to be put on our mailing list for future Newsletters and information about upcoming health-related events, call us:

716/204-5552 x 401

5 Helpful “Stress-busters”

We live in a stressful world. Even good things (getting married, buying a house, getting a new job) cause stress, and although it may be good stress, our bodies just read it as “stress”.

The next time you feel overwhelmed try one of these “stress-busters”

1. Notice your breath for a couple of minutes. No need to change your breath; just notice how your body feels as you inhale and exhale. Notice your chest rise and fall with each breath; notice how cool or warm the air feels as it enters your nostrils.
2. Pick up a pen and paper. When you are feeling overwhelmed by racing thoughts, take a couple of minutes to write down your thoughts – just write them

down, don’t censor them or try to make sense of them. When you’re finished draw a line through things that really don’t matter and prioritize the rest. Getting your thoughts on paper might help the racing in your mind to stop.

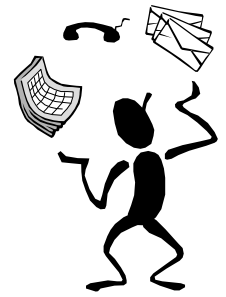
3. Take a hike. When your life feels too full or busy, take a few minutes to walk it off! Walk around the block; walk on a treadmill; walk to the end of the driveway and back. Notice each step as it hits the ground. Notice how your body feels as you swing your arms. Really focus on your “walk” and let your troubles catch up with you later.

4. Turn it over, and over again. When you feel out of control of your life, just remember that there are few things in life over which we have total control. We usually worry most about the things we

control least! Good, bad, or indifferent — “This too shall pass”. Hang in there!

5. Put a “stress magnet” on the ‘fridge.

Make a list of 5 things you can do to lower your stress – take a hot bath, drink a cup of tea, call a friend, pray, go to the gym – whatever works for you. Keep that list on a refrigerator magnet so that when you are having a very stressful day you can simply follow your list. When we are really stressed it is hard to think clearly (let alone be creative), so make it easy to remember by keeping your list on hand for when you really need it!



Is It Really Depression?

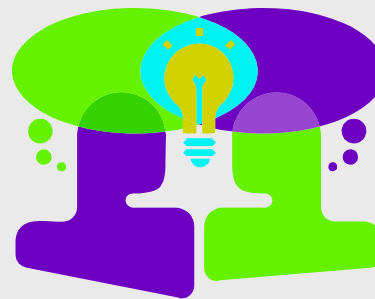
There are certainly times in life when we feel down or sad. Times of loss or grief or feeling let down are examples of those times. Feeling sad is usually a time limited event. Also, it is often interrupted by times of feeling “okay.” When you think that your sadness is overcoming you, consider this:

Depression Checklist

- Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood
- Changes in sleep patterns
- Reduced appetite and weight loss or increased appetite and weight gain
- Loss of pleasure and interest in once-enjoyable activities, including intimacy
- Restlessness, irritability
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as chronic pain or digestive disorders
- Difficulty concentrating on things at work or school, or difficulty remembering things or making decisions
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling guilty, hopeless, or worthless
- Thoughts of suicide or death

If you’ve experienced 5 or more of these symptoms for 2 weeks or longer you may have a clinical depression. See a doctor or qualified Mental Health Professional for help right away. If you feel you might harm yourself or someone else, call your doctor, go to the nearest emergency room, or call Crisis Services at 716/834-3131 and they will help you get the help you need.

How Can Counseling Help?



Counseling can be a wonderful way for you to find helpful methods of managing depression, anxiety, stress, relationship problems, change, loss, and many other

issues. Your counselor is there just for you; focusing on how to best help you in times of trouble or need. Your counselor can assess your symptoms to help determine whether there is call for medical intervention or other services. Sometimes just talking through problems or concerns really helps to diminish the overwhelming effects they might have in your life. Counseling can help give you the perspective you need to challenge yourself and grow. For more information about how counseling can help, call a licensed mental health professional or your physician today.

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