

# Self help matters.

Helping you to find your solutions

## Self-confidence

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Self-confidence is an attitude which allows us to have positive yet realistic views of ourselves and our situations. Having self-confidence does not mean that we will be able to do everything but it helps us to create expectations that are realistic. Even when some of our expectations are not met, we can continue to be positive and to accept ourselves.

We all have some areas of our lives where we feel quite confident, e.g. academia or activities, while at the same time we may not feel confident in other areas, such as in social relationships.

Lack of self-confidence is not necessarily related to lack of ability. It is often the result of focusing too much on the unrealistic expectations or standards of others, especially family, friends and society.

Friends' influences can be as powerful or more powerful than those of family and society in shaping feelings about one's self. Life at University allows you to re-examine values and develop your own identity, so this can make one vulnerable to undue influence of friends.

## Top Tips

**Flexibility.** Avoid 'all or nothing' thinking which restricts learning or potential. One disappointment is not the end of the world. It is what it is.

**Enhance positives.** We often dwell on the bad, not the good. Enjoy, absorb and embrace all of the good you can find.

**Feelings.** You might 'feel' lousy, but this doesn't make you a lousy person. Isolate the feelings and emotions from the whole wider value of being you.

**You.** Appreciate your own unique blend of needs and wants, hopes and dreams, desires and joys.

**Success.** Celebrate each and every achievement and success, however small.

**Fault-free.** Avoid blaming yourself for things that are not your fault.

**Emphasise strengths.** Give yourself credit for everything you try. By focusing on what you can do, you applaud yourself for efforts rather than emphasising end products. Starting from a base of what you can do instead of what you *should* do helps you live within the bounds of your inevitable limitations. We all have them.

**Take risks.** Approach new experiences as opportunities to learn rather than occasions to win or lose. Doing so opens you up to new possibilities and can increase your sense of self-acceptance. Not doing so turns every possibility into an opportunity for failure and inhibits personal growth.

**Self-talk.** Use self-talk as an opportunity to counter harmful assumptions. Practice catching yourself as you make these assumptions. For example, when you find yourself expecting perfection, remind yourself that you can't do everything perfectly, that it's only possible to *try* to do things well and to *try* to do them well. This allows you to accept yourself while still striving to improve. Trying is learning.

**Self-evaluate.** Learn to evaluate yourself independently. Doing so allows you to avoid the constant sense of turmoil that comes from relying exclusively on the opinions of others. Focusing internally on how you feel about your own behaviour, work, etc, will give you a stronger sense of self and will prevent you from giving your personal power away to others.

## Resources

### MOODZONE

Boost your mood, cope with stress, anxiety or depression or simply improve your overall emotional wellbeing.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/low-mood-stress-anxiety.aspx)

### LIVING LIFE TO THE FULL

Want to know how to feel happier, more confident & worry less right now? Would you like to learn new ways of dealing with what life throws at you?



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.livinglifetothefull.com](http://www.livinglifetothefull.com)

### THE MIX

Provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile.



**Opening Hours:** Online

[www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

### MINDFULNESS FOR STUDENTS

Helping you to stay calm, focused & better manage the pressures of student life.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<http://mindfulnessforstudents.co.uk/>

### UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN SERVICES & SUPPORT

A range of support resources for everyone at University



[www.abdn.ac.uk/infocenter/support](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infocenter/support)

### TOGETHER ALL

Online community of people who are anxious, feeling low or not coping who support and help by sharing what's troubling them. This is a free, online, moderated service and confidential.



**Opening Hours:** Online

<https://togetherall.com/en-gb/>

### If you are experiencing a crisis - please contact any of the following

- **Emergency Services** - telephone 999 (Free) 24 hours
- **Samaritans** - telephone 116 123 (Free) 24 hours
- **Breathing Space** - telephone 0800 83 8587 (Free) Mon-Thu 6pm-2am, Fri-Sun 6pm-6am
- **Nightline** - telephone 01224 272829 (local rate) term-time only, between 20.00-08.00
- **NHS 24** - telephone 111 (Free) 24 hours

For other support resources, please see - [www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/counselling)