Self-Esteem Workbook

This free self-esteem workbook puts six of our worksheets into one printable PDF, in an order that builds: notice how you see yourself, catch the harsh voice, answer it more fairly, practise kindness, then grow confidence through small steps. Print it, work through one worksheet a sitting, and go at your own pace.

What's inside

1. **Self-Esteem Worksheet.** Start here. It helps you see how you currently think about yourself, without judging what you find.
2. **Negative Self-Talk Worksheet.** Once you can hear the harsh voice, this one helps you catch a thought, check it, and answer it more fairly.
3. **Positive Self-Talk Worksheet.** Then build the other side: kind, believable things to say to yourself, not fake positivity.
4. **Self-Compassion Worksheet.** For the hard moments, when you need to treat yourself the way you'd treat a friend who was struggling.
5. **Self-Worth Worksheet.** This goes underneath the day-to-day: the sense that you matter, whatever you achieve.
6. **Self-Confidence Worksheet.** Finish with action. Small, planned steps are how trust in yourself grows.

How to use it

- Do one worksheet per sitting. There's no prize for finishing fast.
- Write honestly, even if it's only a line or two. Nobody else needs to see it.
- If a worksheet stirs up more than you expected, stop, and come back another day.
- Keep the finished pages. Looking back after a few weeks is often where you notice change.

If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

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My Self-Esteem Worksheet

Six exercises that train the core habits of healthier self-esteem: a fairer inner voice, a fuller picture, and kinder standards.

01 How am I rating myself lately?

Overall, how do I feel about myself this week?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very low — Very good

If my self-esteem could talk right now, it would say...

02 Catch the inner critic

Write down the critical things you say to yourself most often. Just naming them takes away some of their power.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

03 Put the critic on trial

Pick the harshest thought above. Weigh it like a fair judge would, evidence for, evidence against.

The thought I'm examining:

Evidence it's 100% true	Evidence against / exceptions

A fairer, more balanced version of the thought:

04 The strengths my memory keeps deleting

Low self-esteem filters out the good. Deliberately list strengths, qualities, and things you've done well, small ones count double.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

05 The friend test

Think of how you'd speak to a good friend in your situation. Write what you'd say to them, then notice the gap between that and how you talk to yourself.

What I'd say to a friend who felt the way I do:

06 One kinder standard, starting now

Choose one harsh rule you hold yourself to, and write a fairer one to practise this week.

My current harsh standard	A fairer standard I'll try

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Where did your inner critic's voice originally come from?
- What becomes possible if you talk to yourself like someone you're rooting for?
- Which single strength from section four would you like to lean on more?

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Answering My Inner Critic

Seven short steps to take one harsh thought from 'that's just the truth' to a fairer answer you can actually believe.

01 Catch the thought

You can't answer a thought you haven't noticed. Start with the moment the voice piped up, and write its exact words down.

What happened? The situation, in one line:

The exact words my inner critic said (write them as they came, not tidied up):

How strongly do I believe it right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all — Completely

02 Name what it's doing

The critic almost always breaks a rule of fair thinking. Naming the move takes away a lot of its authority. Tick any that fit.

- [ ] All-or-nothing: one stumble means 'I always fail'.
- [ ] Labelling: turning what I did into what I am, 'I'm an idiot' instead of 'I made a mistake'.
- [ ] Mind-reading: deciding I know what others think, with no real evidence.
- [ ] Catastrophising: jumping to the worst possible outcome.
- [ ] Discounting the good: waving away anything positive as luck or 'they were just being nice'.
- [ ] Should-statements: a running list of how I ought to be, each one a stick to beat myself with.
- [ ] Overgeneralising: one event becomes 'always' or 'never'.

03 Check it against the evidence

Not what feels true, what you could actually show someone. Usually the 'against' column is longer than the voice would have you believe.

Evidence the thought is true	Evidence it isn't (or is exaggerated)

04 The friend test

Imagine someone you care about said this exact thing about themselves, after the exact same event. You'd see it more fairly and more kindly at once. Say that to yourself.

What would I say to a friend who said this about themselves?

05 Answer back fairly, not falsely

The fix for 'I'm useless' is not 'I'm amazing', a statement you don't believe just highlights the lie. Write the fair, believable version a fair observer would give.

The harsh thought	The fair, believable answer

06 Unhook from it

When a thought is too sticky to argue with, put some distance between you and it, so you can see it as mental noise rather than fact.

Rewrite the thought starting with 'I'm having the thought that...':

If it helps, a name for this voice (so it's a voice in the room, not the truth):

07 How do you feel now?

Re-rate the original thought. It rarely drops to zero, and it doesn't need to. A little more distance is the win.

How strongly do I believe the original thought now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all — Completely

Anything I want to remember for next time the voice shows up:

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Whose voice does your inner critic sound like? Where might it have first learned to talk to you this way?
- What is the critic trying to protect you from, and is that fear still accurate today?
- If you spoke to yourself this week the way you'd speak to a good friend, what would actually change?

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My Positive Self-Talk Worksheet

Seven short steps to build a kinder, more believable inner voice, ending with a week of practice.

01 Notice what you usually say to yourself

Before you change your self-talk, catch it. Think about the last few days. What did you say to yourself, out loud or in your head, when things went wrong or got busy?

Phrases I often say to myself (the exact words):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

When does my self-talk get harshest? Tick any that fit.

- ☐ When I make a mistake, even a small one
- ☐ First thing in the morning, or late at night
- ☐ When I look in the mirror or get dressed
- ☐ At work, or when I'm being compared with others
- ☐ Before or after seeing people
- ☐ When I'm tired, hungry or run down
- ☐ When I try something new

Overall, how kind is the way I talk to myself?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very harsh — Very kind

02 Turn them into balanced, believable versions

Take each phrase from step 1 and write a version that is kinder but still true. Not 'I'm amazing', but something a fair friend would say. Adding 'and' often helps: 'This is hard, and I'm getting through it.' Then rate how believable the new version feels.

What I usually say	A balanced version I can believe Kind, specific and true	How believable? (1 to 10)

If a new version scored low, how could I make it more believable? (smaller, more specific, or 'I'm learning to...')

03 What would you say to a friend?

You already know how to talk kindly. You do it with people you care about. Collect that voice here so you can borrow it for yourself.

Things I say to a friend or someone I love when they're struggling:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

The tone I use with them (for example warm, patient, matter-of-fact):

_____

_____

One of those phrases, rewritten for me:

_____

_____

04 A pep talk for a hard moment

Pick something coming up that you're dreading: a meeting, a hard conversation, a first day. Write yourself a short pep talk using your own name and 'you' instead of 'I', the way a supportive friend would talk to you. It can help you take a step back and see the moment more calmly.

The hard moment coming up:

My pep talk, starting with my name. For example: 'Sam, you're nervous, and that makes sense. You've prepared, and you've handled hard things before.'

A one-line version to say to myself in the moment:

05 Statements I actually believe

Gather the lines from this page that feel true to you, even on a bad day. A short list you believe is worth more than a long one you don't. Keep it where you'll see it.

Kind, true things I can say to myself:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

06 A 7-day practice log

Once a day, note one moment when the old voice showed up and what you said to yourself instead. Some days you'll only notice it afterwards, and that still counts.

Day	The moment	What the old voice said	What I said instead

07 Looking back on the week

Re-rate it. Change is usually small and gradual. A little more kindness than last week is the win.

Now, how kind is the way I talk to myself?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very harsh — Very kind

Which phrase helped most, and when do I want to use it next week?

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which of your usual phrases would you never say to someone you love? Where do you think you picked it up?
- When has a kind word from yourself actually helped, even a little?
- What would change this week if your first reaction to a mistake was 'that's OK, what's next?'
- Which statement on your list feels most true, and why?

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My Self-Compassion Worksheet

Seven short steps to meet one hard moment the way you'd meet a good friend's, ending with an evening journal to keep it going.

01 What's hard right now?

Start with one specific moment. Name it plainly, then notice how you've been treating yourself about it.

What's happening that's hard? In a line or two:

What have I been saying to myself about it? (the exact words)

How harshly am I treating myself about this right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very gently — Very harshly

02 A self-compassion break

Kristin Neff's three-step practice. Bring the moment to mind and let yourself feel a little of it. If it helps, put a hand on your heart as you write.

1. Mindfulness: 'This is a moment of suffering.' What am I feeling, said plainly, without making it bigger or smaller?

2. Common humanity: 'I'm not alone.' Who else might feel this way in a situation like mine?

3. Kindness: 'May I be kind to myself.' What do I need to hear right now?

03 The friend test

Imagine a close friend came to you with this exact problem. Notice the difference between how you'd treat them and how you've been treating yourself.

What I'd say to a friend

And the tone I'd use

What I've said to myself

And the tone I've used

What am I afraid would happen if I spoke to myself the way I'd speak to them?

04 What do I need right now?

Self-compassion isn't only soothing. Sometimes the kind thing is to rest, and sometimes it's to act. Tick what fits.

- [ ] Comfort: to go gently and let this be hard for a while.
- [ ] Rest, or an early night.
- [ ] To talk to someone I trust.
- [ ] To say no, or set a limit, to protect myself.
- [ ] To take one small step to change something.
- [ ] To forgive myself, and make amends if I can.

One kind thing I'll do for myself today:

05 A letter from a kind friend

Imagine a friend who is completely kind and accepting. They see all your strengths and all your flaws, and they understand what shaped you. Write to yourself from them, about this moment or a flaw you often judge yourself for.

Start with 'Dear [your name],' and write as they would:

06 How do I feel now?

Re-rate it. It doesn't need to drop to zero. A little more warmth is the win.

How harshly am I treating myself about this now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very gently — Very harshly

A phrase I want to remember next time:

07 Keep it going: an evening journal

Neff suggests trying this every evening for a week. Note one thing from the day you felt bad about, then take it through the three parts.

Mindfulness	Common humanity	Kindness
How I felt, said plainly	How it's part of being human	What I'd say to myself kindly

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- When did you last treat a friend with real kindness? What would it take to give yourself the same?
- What does your harshest inner voice say most often, and whose voice does it sound like?
- What are you afraid would happen if you stopped being so hard on yourself?
- What are you struggling with that many other people struggle with too?
- What would having your own back look like this week?

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My Self-Worth Worksheet

Six short exercises to notice where your worth is hanging, and to set it down somewhere steadier.

01 Where is my worth hanging right now?

Finish each line honestly. There's no wrong ending, you're just mapping what's currently true.

I tend to feel worthy when...

I tend to feel worthless or 'not enough' when...

02 The conditions I've attached to my worth

Look at your answers above. What conditions have you quietly set, and where might each one have come from (a parent, a school, a job, a culture)?

The condition I set e.g. 'only worthy if productive'	Where it came from a person, time, or place

03 How my sense of worth has changed over time

Your sense of your own value is not fixed. Look back at a few points in your life that feel OK to look at, and notice what it rested on then. You don't have to go back to painful times here: if one comes up, write one line and move on, or skip this. Then pick one condition from above and ask whether it is a fact or a belief you were handed.

A time in my life e.g. at school, a first job, a few years ago	What my worth rested on then

One condition from above: is it a fact, or a belief I was handed? What makes me think so?

04 Evidence I matter beyond those conditions

List moments, relationships, or small things that suggest you have value even when you're not achieving anything, times you were kind, present, honest, or simply there.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

05 Talking back to the harsh voice

Write the thing the harsh inner voice says on the left. On the right, write the reply you'd give a friend who said the same thing about themselves.

What the harsh voice says	A truer, kinder reply

06 My own definition of worth

In your own words, finish this: 'My worth as a person comes from...' Write the version you'd want a younger version of you to grow up believing.

07 A quick check-in

How steady does your sense of worth feel today?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very shaky — Very steady

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which condition would change the most about your life if you let it go?
- What would you do differently this week if your worth wasn't up for debate?
- Who in your life already sees your worth the way you wrote it in section six?

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My Self-Confidence Worksheet

Five exercises to build confidence from what's real: your strengths, your track record, and one small step.

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01 Where do I want more confidence?

Name the specific situation, not 'be more confident' in general.

The situation or area where I want more confidence:

How confident do I feel about it right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all — Completely

02 My strengths inventory

List things you're genuinely good at, or qualities people rely on you for. Include the small and unglamorous ones too, such as 'patient', 'a good listener' or 'I finish what I start'.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

03 Evidence I've handled hard things before

Write past moments when you coped, learned, recovered, or did something that scared you. This is your track record, proof you can handle more than your doubt admits.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

04 The doubt vs. the evidence

Write the self-doubt thought on the left. On the right, answer it with a specific fact from your strengths or track record above.

What self-doubt says	The evidence that answers it

05 One small action

Confidence follows action. Choose one small step towards your situation, small enough that you'll almost certainly do it this week.

The one small action I'll take:

When and where I'll do it:

What's the smallest first move that makes it easy to start?

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- If you fully trusted your own track record, what would you stop avoiding?
- Whose voice is the self-doubt in, is it even yours?
- What would 'confident enough' look like, not fearless, just willing to act?

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