INTRODUCTION
A. We will look at these three “self’s” individually. Build their confidence by building their self-esteem.
B. “Life is what you make it.” “You only have one life, therefore live it to its fullness.”

DISCUSSION
I. HOW TO IMPROVE SELF-ESTEEM.
   B. Self-Esteem defined.
      1. Respect for and confident acceptance of oneself as a person created by and useful to God.
      2. Self-esteem must be based on an understanding that people are created by God to be highly exalted (PS 8:3–8; cp. GE 1:26–27) yet are miserably fallen sinners (RO 3:23; 7:24).
      3. Every person, no matter how sinful, is of inestimable value to God (Luke 15:11–32; 1 CO 6:20) and supremely loved by Him (1 John 4:10; cp. RO 8:35–39).
      4. Christians are new creatures (creation – 2 CO 5:17) that allows them to be self-confident, but only through Christ (1 CO 9:24; 2 CO 3:5; 10:7; PH 3:4–7; 4:13).
      5. Both self-elation and self-abasement ignore the work of Christ in a believer (2 CO 12:7–10; CO 2:18, 23). Paul taught that Christians should strive for a balanced self-esteem that is able to minister to the needs of others (RO 12:3; 2 CO 10:7–13; GA 6:1–3; PH 2:3).
   C. Because of abuse, failure in past relationships, or even a discouraging home life many people have very low self-esteem. They feel inadequate or incapable of a relationship with someone of the opposite sex. “If a male feels inadequate or unmasculine, he may seek a safe relationship where he does not have to act like a male or prove his maleness” (Collins 292). George Gilder summed up this idea very well when he said, “…to have a woman, a man must to some extent feel himself a man” (227). Self-esteem can be built in children by giving them praise, avoiding criticism in the form of shame or ridicule, teaching them how to solve their own problems, and showing them that they can laugh at themselves (Child’s).
   D. Power and Self-Esteem - An illusion of power will result in a seeming self-confidence, while the illusion of powerlessness will give birth to a feeling of helplessness. An adult with seemingly high self-esteem and an adult with seemingly low self-esteem are equally deluded, since neither sense is based on truth. High self-esteemers tend to accomplish more in life by the world’s standards; but in times of crisis, they are just as vulnerable to psychopathology as are low self-esteemers. In the stock market crash of 1929, it was the successful that leapt out of windows to their deaths. Underachievers were in a much safer place, with much less to lose materially.
   E. The Bible and Self-Esteem. No person is one-dimensional. Actually, there are three views of every individual: the view that God has of us, the opinions that others hold concerning us, and the perception we have of ourselves. Each of these is quite important.
      1. God’s Image … of Us.
First, let us consider the divine vantage point. This is the assessment that is accurate in every detail. The Lord does not observe people merely outwardly, as humans tend to do. 1 Samuel 16:7, 1 Kings 8:39. As the godly, Hannah acknowledged in her prayer: 1 Samuel 2:3. Similarly, Christ once affirmed that he did not need to be educated regarding the inner workings of the human personality, because he himself “knew what was in man” (John 2:25).

If some of the world’s “beautiful people” were turned inside out, and revealed as God sees them, how grotesque they might appear.

2. How Others View Us. Second, there are the sentiments that our peers entertain regarding us. Such assessments are only relatively accurate. Folks may hold an opinion of us that is greatly exaggerated. Those who are in the public eye are rather idealized at times. On the other hand, some, who are sterling in character, sometimes are maligned unjustly. Jesus certainly did not deserve the hateful reproaches that were heaped upon him. In addition, Paul, the apostle of Christ, suffered a good deal of unmerited character assassination.

3. What We See in the Mirror. Finally, there is that appraisal one makes of himself. Honesty demands that we concede that self-perception may be grossly inflated. That is why we are cautioned not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought (Romans 12:3). We must attempt not to be “high-minded” or “wise in [our] own conceits” (Romans 11:20; 12:16). If we really knew the impressions that others have of us, we might see ourselves in a very different light, and thus alter our conduct.

It is important, though, that one have a healthy view of oneself. Jesus said that we should love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). That implies a sound concept of self-esteem. Sadly, however, many appear to harbor a very meager appreciation of themselves—so much, so that it hinders their effective service to God, and torments their lives with much unhappiness.

I believe the Scriptures address this problem, and offer hope to those who are unnecessarily depressed due to the condition of an impoverished self-esteem.

F. In this discussion, I would like to reflect primarily upon three areas: the causes, the characteristics, and the cure for negative self-esteem.


In a discussion of this nature, one cannot be exhaustive. It is possible, however, to pinpoint certain known sources of deprived self-esteem. Let us consider the following factors.

**Physical Features.** Many people have personal esteem problems due to what they perceive as unattractive physical features. From their own viewpoint they may be too heavy, too thin, have a bad complexion, crooked teeth, etc. More likely than not, all of us have physical traits that we would like to alter if such were possible. However, the truth is, while physical characteristics may make an initial impression upon others, they are subordinated rapidly to personality qualities. Some, who are quite attractive physically, are so
obnoxious in disposition that folks are loath to be around them. Others, who are a bit “plainer,” have tons of friends because intelligent people are attracted to their charm, wit, compassion, or overall spiritual depth.

Lack of Education.

Some feel badly about themselves because of their limited formal education. However, remember this:

• Some of the wisest and most prominent people of history were not privileged with an abundance of formal schooling. Abraham Lincoln spent less than one year in the classroom, yet he was recognized as a brilliant leader.
• Some of the stupidest folks of history have been laden with education. The expression “educated fool” did not arise in a vacuum.
• It is never too late to learn. Some have acquired college degrees in their sunset years.
• In the final analysis, a knowledge of God’s Word is the best depository of information that one can possess. The noted educator, William Lyon Phelps, once said, “I thoroughly believe in a university education for both men and women; but I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college education is more valuable than a college course without the Bible” (quoted in Dehoff 1956, 13).

Tragic Circumstances.

Low self-esteem may result from the tragic circumstances in one’s past. For example, a person may have been conceived out of wedlock, or as the result of rape, and so harbor a self-disgust. The late Ethel Waters, a popular singer, was the offspring of a brutal rape, yet she overcame the knowledge of that horrible event and became a famous and gracious performer who sought to help others. Children frequently suffer from low self-esteem because of the vile deeds of their parents. The story is told of a man who, in a drunken rage, murdered a popular city official. The killer’s youngsters languished for years under the humiliation of that brutality. A group of children, all of whom had parents who were divorced, was discussing common problems. Several were overheard reproaching themselves for the break-up of their families. We must learn that we are not responsible for the wicked actions of others. Self-reproach is unwarranted in such cases.

Physical or Emotional Abuse.

Abuse can ravage one’s self-esteem. Not infrequently, a parent or spouse will berate a child or a companion persistently and viciously, so that the feeling of personal worth in the victim becomes almost nil. An uncaring husband may tell his wife that she is ugly, fat, stupid, or lazy. A good “beating” with words can be as devastating as physical brutality. Some children’s psyches are damaged enormously by sexual abuse.
Constant, harsh criticism also can wound a youngster’s sense of personal pride. Victims of abuse must learn that they can get past these horrible experiences and find true happiness in living.

_Sin_.

One of the most prominent causes of low self-esteem is an involvement in personal sin. Sin scars terribly. It is sometimes the case that one who loves God deeply, and who strives for spiritual maturity, will, in a moment of weakness, fall into some dreadful form of wickedness. The crushing blow of such a transgression may have lasting effects that so debilitate the person that he has a very difficult time regaining a sense of Christian dignity, particularly if others have been privy to the transgression.

One cannot but be reminded of the agony of David’s soul following his tragic moral lapse with Bathsheba. His body “wasted away” and he “groaned” throughout the day. There was no relief to his troubled spirit either day or night, until he acknowledged his sin and allowed God to take away his pain (see Psalm 32:3-5).

Yielding to evil can rob the conscience of that sense of well-being God intended us to have. However, there is a remedy for sin that allows one the opportunity to recapture his sense of joy and purpose. I will discuss that presently.

2. **Characteristics of Low Self-Esteem.**

The attitudes that dwell within the mind frequently are reflected in the conduct of a person. An inspired writer affirmed that, as one “thinks within himself, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7). Jesus himself taught that the state of one’s mind is the fountain of his activity. “For from within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed” (Mark 7:21).

If an individual harbors an unhealthy view of himself, such can be manifested in a variety of distressing ways.

**Substance Abuse.**

It is no secret that many who are suffering from esteem problems have become victims of substance abuse. Self-depreciation has driven some to immerse their woes in alcohol, hard drugs, or a daily pill-popping routine. Drugs are so deceptive; they promise much but deliver nothing—except carnage. Drug abuse is one of the major problems of our nation, much of which stems from a self-perceived lack of worth and a void of purpose for human existence. Other forms of aberrant behavior also follow in the wake of unhealthy personal attitudes.

**Sexual Promiscuity.**

A professional discussed the many problems that seem to rob modern society of reasonable mental health, the conversation turned to the phenomenon of accelerated sexual promiscuity among the nation’s citizenry. The counselor confidently affirmed that many youngsters are growing up with no sense of personal value.

In thousands of instances, children have been neglected and feel worthless. Many are casualties of broken homes. Others suffer because their parents are materialistic and so busy working long hours, and at multiple jobs.
(in order to have more “things”), that they do not have the time to give their children the loving care they so desperately need and want.

Accordingly, many young folks, starving for affection, surrender themselves (without reservation) to anyone who is there to provide a warm hug and an understanding heart. And the fact is, what is true for youngsters also is the case for many adults as well. A lack of personal esteem is a prime cause of sexual immorality. Sexual compromise itself then frequently produces additional humiliation. It thus becomes a vicious circle.

A Critical Spirit

A damaged self-view can result in a haughty or critical demeanor. There are two ways some people deal with their diminutive self-image. They may elevate themselves above others artificially. Or, they may attempt to cut down their associates. The net result is the same. The perpetrator ends up above his peers.

For instance, a lack of self-esteem sometimes is reflected in a person’s exaggeration of his accomplishments. A constant tendency to boast of one’s abilities—even to the point of lying about achievements—is a red-flag signal. “Let another man praise thee, and not your own mouth” (Proverbs 27:2).

Correspondingly, the tendency to work continually at tearing down others tells more about the character assassin than anything else does. An emotionally healthy person has no need to feed his ego at the expense of others.

Materialism

A poor self-image sometimes manifests itself in materialism. Some folks feel that if they can surround themselves with an abundance of nice things, it will overcome the feeling of insecurity that seems ever to be with them.

We are not suggesting that hard-working people cannot enjoy a quality life as good stewards of the manifold blessings of God. What we are saying is this: the accumulation of material things will not provide the sense of genuine well-being for which each of us longs. Feeling good about oneself, and feeling good about possessions, are entirely different matters.

Allan Cohen is professor of management at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. He is consultant to many large corporations, including Chase Manhattan, Xerox, Polaroid, etc. Professor Cohen contends: Young people are free to conquer the world—and they do not want it. Material prosperity has not made life meaningful. The hunger for love and real meaning are the forces behind the psychedelic revolution (quoted by Zacharias 1990, 70).

Jesus taught: LK 12:15. Riches of the soul will provide you with a sense of excellence that no bank account, home, or automobile ever can.

The Despair of Secularism

Before we discuss the remedy for poor self-esteem, as set forth in the Bible, we must observe that the world of philosophy and/or secular psychology has utterly nothing to offer the person of low esteem. The ideology of unbelief cannot generate any true and lasting sense of personal dignity.

The believer may survey the wonders of God’s creation and gasp in contemplation of the fact that all of this was made for humankind. This was
David’s sentiment in PS 8:3-4. In contrast, skepticism offers nothing but the void of the material world.

In his powerful book, Therefore Stand, Wilbur Smith had a chapter titled “The Pessimism of Our Contemporary Skeptics,” in which he cited the testimony of numerous unbelievers relative to their perceptions of human existence and worth. In addition, what a distressing array of complainers it was.

The French deist Voltaire (1694-1778) said, for example, that except for a “few sages,” the whole “crowd of human beings is nothing but a horrible assemblage of unfortunate criminals.” He further suggested, “The globe contains nothing but corpses.” He concluded: “I wish I had never been born” (as quoted in Smith 1945, 189). Some disposition!

David Hume (1711-1776), the Scottish philosopher who did more to destroy faith in miracles than any other man who has ever lived, wrote, “Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence, and to what condition shall I return? . . . I am confounded with all these quotations, and begin to fancy myself in the most deplorable condition imaginable, environed with the deepest darkness, and utterly deprived of the use of every member and faculty” (as quoted in Smith 1945, 553).

Little wonder that such a dismal ideology prevails, when one entertains the notion that he serves no real purpose upon this planet; rather, he is merely the unfortunate offspring of the blind and bloody forces of nature.

The English poet Matthew Arnold (1822-1888) was a militant critic of the Bible. In spite of his hostility toward Christianity, Arnold recognized that human existence without a sense of God is bleak indeed. In 1867, he wrote the poem Dover Beach, in which he described an environment void of an awareness of divine benevolence. Part of that composition reads as follows:

. . . the world, which seems To lie before us like a land of dreams, So various, so beautiful, so new, Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light, Nor certitude, nor peace, not help for pain; And we are here as on a darkening plain Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, Where ignorant armies clash by night. (1961, 211-212)

Bertrand Russell, the British agnostic who did so much to oppose biblical religion, once wrote, “I do know the despair of my soul. I know the great loneliness, as I wander through the world like a ghost, speaking in tones that are not heard, lost as if I had fallen from some other planet” (1968, 145).

One of Russell’s biographers, in a chapter titled, “The Religion of Sorrow,” quoted the philosopher, in a rare moment of candor:

[T]he loneliness of the human soul is unendurable; nothing can penetrate it except the highest intensity of the sort of love that religious teachers have preached; whatever does not spring from this motive is harmful, or at best useless (Monk 1996, 135).

There is, therefore, no need to consult the skeptic for any sense of intrinsic human worth. His philosophy robs us of much and leaves nothing in return. One’s self-perception certainly is not enhanced by entertaining the notion that he is nothing more than a “naked ape”—to borrow from the title of English zoologist Desmond Morris’s book, The Naked Ape: A Zoologist’s Study of the Human Animal.

In marked contrast to the stagnant world of secularism, biblical revelation presents two thrilling facts, which, if embraced, can provide one with an exhilarating sense of individual excellence.

1. Man possesses dignity by virtue of his divine generation.
2. Though blemished by sin, man can regain his self-esteem through the process of spiritual regeneration. Let us probe these two points more deeply.

Who We Are?

Man was made in the very image of God himself. On the sixth day of the creation week. GE 1:26-27; 9:6; 2:20-23; 1 CO 11:7. This circumstance, of course, has no reference to our physical constitution, for God is a spirit Being (John 4:24), not a physical one (Luke 24:39; cf. Matthew 16:17). That “image” then consists of spiritual qualities, in man’s mental and moral attributes as a self-conscious, rational, personal agent, capable of self-determination and obedience to moral law (Orr 1939, 1264).

Another writer noted that the personality is unique, “linking us to what is above, and separating us from what is below” (Marais 1939, 146). We are intellectual, self-conscious, volitional creatures—designed by our Maker for fellowship with him. Even the ancient pagans seem to have retained a vestige of this concept. Aratus, a Greek poet, affirmed: “We are also his offspring” (cf. Acts 17:28). Marais thus concluded: “Psychologically and historically therefore the Bible view [of humankind] is justified.”

Can we actually fathom the unique honor that the Creator has bestowed upon us by endowing us with certain qualities that are intrinsic to his nature? The very contemplation of such is enough to both humble and thrill us.

God’s Unspeakable Gift

A second fact that breathtakingly crowns human beings with a wonderful feeling of value is the fact that God bestowed his Son as a gracious, free gift, so that every accountable person has the potential for redemption. All that is necessary to achieve such is to surrender to the Lord’s will (Hebrews 5:8-9). That humanity has strayed from the Creator, and become so flawed religiously and morally, is an indisputable fact. If humanity were reprised according to what it deserves, eternal separation from Jehovah (a horror unimaginable) would be its dismal lot. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). There is, however, a way of escape (Hebrews 2:3-4).

Throughout the New Testament, there are repeated affirmations of the universal love of God for fallen man. God so loved the world that he gave his only Son in order to initiate a system of forgiveness (see John 3:16). The Lord would have all men to be saved by means of coming to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4).

Hear the testimony of John the apostle: 1 JN 3:1.

Do we really realize the value of this offer of a child-to-Father relationship with God; as a consequence of Christ’s mission (see Galatians 4:4-5)? Again: 1 John 4:10.

Can anyone bask in that sort of love and not feel a sense of surpassing value? It would be superfluous to pile up passages that announce Heaven’s concern for the teeming masses of sinful creatures. They are found in abundance. While we are profoundly grateful for those benevolent declarations, one is
taken to a new level of gratitude when he reflects upon the fact that the Scriptures consistently assert the message of God’s love for the individual soul.

In that trio of parables given by the Lord in Luke 15—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost boy—the value of the individual person is underscored forcefully. Heaven is not willing that anyone should perish (2 Peter 3:9). And why not? Because the value of a single soul is worth more than the entire world (Matthew 16:26).

The apostle Paul, in discussing why we should respect the tender consciences of our kinsmen in Christ, spoke of “the brother for whose sake Christ died” (1 Corinthians 8:11). Had there been but one sinner in all the world’s history, Christ would have died for him.

How can one savor these marvelous truths without feeling a sense of profound awe in the divine order of things? When this concept sinks in and takes root, all of the negative influences in the world—which tend to generate self-deprecation—will fade, leaving us with an appreciation of how very special we are.

There is another factor in the divine scheme of things that has long intrigued me.

Here are the interesting details: Prior to his coming to Earth, the eternal, personal Word, identified in the New Testament as Christ (John 1:1), was equal to the First Person of the Godhead (Philippians 2:6).

However, as a component of implementing this plan, the Word became flesh (John 1:14), thus emptying himself of the “independent exercise” of the divine attributes (cf. Thiessen 1949, 296).

In this subordinated capacity, the Son could say, “The Father is greater than I” (John 14:28), and Paul could affirm: “The head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3).

The incarnation did not involve a forfeiture of Jesus’ deity, as some have alleged (see Barclay 1959, 45), but it did entail a subordination of role, and an identification with humanity.

This brings us to an important point. When Christ assumed his submission-role as God-man, was that a temporary status, or was the identity-connection with us permanent?

Again, we must express our disagreement with Barclay, who asserted “[T]he manhood of Jesus was not permanent; He became man, but only for a time” (1959, 46).

We believe there is clear evidence that, somehow or another, the voluntary subordination of Christ had permanent ramifications. Consider the following:

• Even though the Lord had already ascended back into heaven, Paul was still proclaiming that he “is [present tense verb] the Son of God” (Acts 9:20).
• Again, thirty years or so after the Lord’s ascension, the apostle refers to the Savior, our Mediator before God, as the man, Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5).
• The writer of Hebrews affirmed: Hebrews 2:11.
Even in the final order of things, following “the end,” Christ will deliver all things back to God, and he himself be subject to the Father (see 1 CO 15:24-28).

What is the significance of this? If it is the case that the mission of the Son of God involved an eternal surrender of certain privileges, all for our benefit, it reveals a depth of divine love for us that is utterly staggering. If that does not enhance one’s appreciation for his worth, nothing will.

CONCLUSION
A. Our hearts truly go out to those who labor under the burden of a diminished self-image. I am not suggesting that the healing of such will be easy or immediate.
B. However, I confidently can offer the promise that the solution to such an impoverished disposition does lie with the pages of the Bible. Pour over the Word of God and imbibe the messages of joy and hope found therein. It can be a life-changing experience.

II. HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE.
A. Taking control of your self-confidence.
1. If you are low in self-confidence, is it possible to do things that will change that?
2. Is your self-confidence in your control?
B. While it may not seem so, if you are low in self-confidence, I strongly believe that you can do things to increase your self-confidence. It is not genetic, and you do not have to be reliant on others to increase your self-confidence. In addition, if you believe that you are not very competent, not very smart, not very attractive, etc. … that can be changed. Example – Waitress at Waffle House.
C. You can become someone worthy of respect, and someone who can pursue what he wants despite the naysaying of others.
D. You can do this by taking control of your life, and taking control of your self-confidence. By taking concrete actions that improve your competence, your self-image, you can increase that self-confidence, without the help of anyone else.
E. 25 things that will help you do that. None of them is revolutionary, none of them will do it all by themselves. The list certainly is not comprehensive. And you do not need to do all of them, as if this were a recipe … pick and choose those that appeal to you, maybe just a couple at first, and give them a try. If they work, try others. If they do not, try others. Here they are, in no particular order:
1. Groom yourself. This seems like such an obvious one, but it is amazing how much of a difference a shower and a shave can make in your feelings of self-confidence and for your self-image. There have been days when I turned my mood around completely with this one little thing.
2. Dress nicely. A corollary of the first item above … if you dress nicely, you will feel good about yourself. You will feel successful, presentable, and ready to tackle the world. Now, dressing nicely means something different for everyone … it does not necessarily mean wearing a $500 outfit, but could mean casual clothes that are nice looking and presentable.
3. Photoshop your self-image. Our self-image means so much to us, more than we often realize. We have a mental picture of ourselves, and it determines how confident we are in ourselves. However, this picture is not fixed and immutable. You can change it. Use your mental Photoshopping skills, and work on your self-image. If
it is not a very good one, change it. Figure out why you see yourself that way, and find a way to fix it.

4. Think positive. One of the things I learned when I started running, about two years ago, what how to replace negative thoughts (see next item) with positive ones. How I can actually change my thoughts, and by doing so make great things happened.

5. Kill negative thoughts. Goes hand-in-hand with the above item, but it is so important that I made it a separate item. You have to learn to be aware of your self-talk, the thoughts you have about yourself and what you are doing. When I was exercising everyday sometimes my mind would start to say, “This is too hard. I want to stop.” There is a need to learn to recognize this negative self-talk, and learned a trick will changed it. Example: Imagine that a negative thought was a bug, and you would vigilantly be on the lookout for these bugs. When you caught one, you would stomp on it (mentally of course) and squash it. Kill it dead. Then replace it with a positive one. (“C’mon, I can do this! Only one mile left!”). If you know, yourself and you will win all battles.

6. Get to know yourself. When going into battle, the wisest general learns to know his enemy very, very well. You cannot defeat the enemy without knowing him. In addition, when you are trying to overcome a negative self-image and replace it with self-confidence, your enemy is yourself. Get to know yourself well. Start listening to your thoughts. Start writing a journal about yourself, and about the thoughts you have about yourself, and analyzing why you have such negative thoughts. Start thinking about your limitations, and whether they are real limitations or just ones you have allowed to be placed there, artificially. Dig deep within yourself, and you will come out (eventually) with even greater self-confidence.

7. Act positive. More than just thinking positive, you have to put it into action. Action, actually, is the key to developing self-confidence. It is one thing to learn to think positive, but when you start acting on it, you change yourself, one action at a time. You are what you do, and so if you change what you do, you change what you are. Act in a positive way, take action instead of telling yourself you cannot, be positive. Talk to people in a positive way, put energy into your actions. You will soon start to notice a difference.

8. Be kind and generous. We know that being kind to others and generous with yourself and your time and what you have, is a tremendous way to improve your self-image. You act in accordance with the Golden Rule, and you start to feel good about yourself, and to think that you are a good person. It does wonders for your self-confidence, believe me. One important key to success is self-confidence. A key to self-confidence is preparation.

9. Get prepared. It is hard to be confident in yourself if you do not think you will do well at something. Beat that feeling by preparing yourself as much as possible. Think about taking an exam: if you have not studied, you will not have much confidence in your abilities to do well on the exam. However, if you studied, you are prepared, and you will be much more confident. Now think of life as your exam, and prepare yourself.

10. Know your principles and live them. What are the principles upon which your life is built? If you do not know, you will have trouble, because your life will feel directionless. For myself, I try to live the Golden Rule (and fail often). This is my key
principle, and I try to live my life in accordance with it. I have others, but they are mostly in some way related to this rule. Think about your principles … you might have them but perhaps you have not given them much thought. Now think about whether you actually live these principles, or if you just believe in them but do not act on them.

11. Speak slowly.
14. Set a small goal and achieve it. People often make the mistake of shooting for the moon, and then when they fail, they get discouraged.
15. Change a small habit. Not a big one. Just a small one, like writing things down. Or waking up 10 minutes earlier. Or drinking a glass of water when you wake up. Something small that you know you can do. Do it for a month. When you have accomplished it, you will feel like a million bucks.
16. Focus on solutions. If you are a complainer, or focus on problems, change your focus now. Focusing on solutions instead of problems is one of the best things you can do for your confidence and your career. “I’m fat and lazy!” So how can you solve that? “But I can’t motivate myself!” So how can you solve that? “But I have no energy!” So what is the solution?
17. Smile.
18. Volunteer.
19. Be grateful. However, I put it here because while being grateful for what you have in life, for what others have given you, is a very humbling activity … it can also be a very positive and rewarding activity that will improve your self-image.
20. Exercise. Exercise can be one of our most activities. It will make you feel so much better about yourself. All you have to do is take a walk a few times a week, and you will see benefits. Start the habit.
21. Empower yourself with knowledge. Empowering yourself, in general, is one of the best strategies for building self-confidence. You can do that in many ways, but one of the surest ways to empower yourself is through knowledge. This is along the same vein as building competence and getting prepared … by becoming more knowledgeable, you will be more confident … and you become more knowledgeable by doing research and studying.
22. Do something you have been procrastinating on. What is on your commotion list that has been sitting there? Do it first thing in the morning, and get it out of the way. You will feel great about yourself.
23. Get active. Doing something is usually better than not doing anything. Of course, doing something could lead to mistakes … but mistakes are a part of life. It is how we learn. Without mistakes, we would never get better. So do not worry about those. Just do something. Get up and off and get active — physically, or active by taking steps to accomplish something.
24. Work on small things. Small little achievements make you feel good, and they add up to big achievements.
25. Clear your desk. This might seem like a small, simple thing (then again, for some of you it might not be so small). However, it has always worked wonders for me. If my desk starts to get messy, and the world around me is in chaos, clearing off my
desk is my way of getting a little piece of my life under control. It is the calm in the center of the storm around me. Here is how.

F. Passages for self-confidence.

Philippians 4:13
2 Timothy 1:7
Hebrews 10:35-36
Hebrews 13:6
Joshua 1:9
Psalm 139:13
Psalm 27:3
Ephesians 4:29
Proverbs 3:6
John 4:18
Psalm 138:
Philippians 4:4-7
Galatians 2:20
Philippians 1:6
Matthew 6:34
2 Corinthians 12:9
Luke 14:8-11
Psalm 91:1-16
1 Corinthians 2:3-5
Ephesians 4:32
Proverbs 3:1-26
Hebrews 4:16
Proverbs 3:26
James 1:12
Romans 8:28
Proverbs 29:25
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
1 Timothy 4:12
Isaiah 41:10
Psalm 23:1-6
2 Peter 1:3
Luke 6:31
1 Peter 3:10
Hebrews 11:1-40
Jeremiah 17:7-8
Philippians 2:14
Psalm 27:1-2
1 Peter 4:8
Psalm 42:5
1 John 5:14-15
2 Timothy 2:1
Romans 8:1-39
John 3:16
Isaiah 40:31
2 Timothy 1:12
Ephesians 2:9
Hebrews 10:35
Romans 8:32
Hebrews 13:5
Habakkuk 3:17-19
John 13:34-35
Deuteronomy 32:10
1 Peter 3:9
John 15:26
Psalm 46:1-11
Ephesians 1:18-23
Romans 12:3
2 Chronicles 16:9
Romans 8:30
Proverbs 3:24-26
Psalm 118:6
Joshua 1:1-8:35
Luke 5:13
2 Corinthians 3:4-6
Jeremiah 1:6-9
Philippians 3:10
1 Samuel 12:20
1 John 4:4
Philippians 3:3
Isaiah 1:1-31
Genesis 1:31
Exodus 3:10-4:14
1 John 4:20
Psalm 40:1
Luke 15:11-32
Psalm 118:24
1 Corinthians 4:6ff
John 14:1-31
1 Samuel 1:1-28
Mark 11:23
James 4:13-17
Luke 6:45
Jeremiah 11:7
Psalm 73:4-6
Psalm 56:3
Psalm 23:1
Mark 9:23
Matthew 19:26
Proverbs 28:1
Genesis 6:1-22
Luke 6:43
Matthew 5:16
HOW TO GAIN SELF RESPECT?

Man’s life is a quest, a struggle to gain self-respect. Self-respect is the highest degree of contentment, which has no alternate therapy. But earning respect is not an easy job to be accomplished. There is always a battle to be fought in order to be victorious. We need to put real effort to gain self-respect in life. Self-awareness, self-knowledge, self-acceptance, and self-discipline are the four milestones for developing self-respect in life.

Self-awareness is the discovery of our inner self, the understanding of the self-worth which is an essential element of self-respect. Self-awareness means self-knowledge; we need to speak to our inner soul to know our rights and responsibilities, principles and ethics, achievements and failures, goals and objectives along with our merits and demerits. Self-awareness is a mission and once we accomplish it we are awakened and enlightened knowing our real soul, which is pure and genuine. Self-awareness leads to self-knowledge that is an authentic experience of our inner self. Self-knowledge is a person’s own asset; it is the dignity that one holds for himself. Every individual is blessed with certain qualities and our self-knowledge makes us aware about those talents and these assist us to realize our strengths and weaknesses, potentials and drawbacks. A true knowledge about our own-selves enables us to have a control over our actions and emotions. Self-knowledge helps us to resist the ruthless prosecution of any unwanted situation in life.

Self-acceptance means giving value to our individuality, accepting us the way we are. As human beings, we all are granted some values that are different from the rest. The uniqueness of human life lies in its characters, traits, actions and performances. Self-acceptance is the final verdict of the true seeker in finding out the basic reality of human life. We were never born to put and adjust our feet into someone else’s shoes. Self-acceptance means adoring our life and being in love with our own individuality before anybody could recognize it. Self-acceptance gives us the confidence to face all challenges in life; the application of this virtue eventually crowns us with self-respect. Self-discipline is the final input of self-respect; self-discipline means fixing our objectives and nurturing them throughout our lives. Self-discipline indicates one’s approach and conduct towards life. In our lifetime, we face miscellaneous situations when we tend to lose our self-control and end up reacting violently. But our action and emotions are completely under control once we attain self-discipline in life. Hence, self-discipline forms the primary basis of individual self-respect.

Meditation, perseverance and practice are the three attributes that collectively pave the way for our self-respect. Meditation is a prayer, a desire to attain awareness in life. Meditation is the highest degree of experiencing the real essence of life, a deeper understanding of the inner self. Meditation makes us composed rather than scattered, it develops a positive self-approach to see the brighter aspects of life. A positive outlook towards our life finally helps to develop self-respect within our own-selves. Self-respect requires determination or strong will power. Earning self-respect is a continuous process and one needs to be affirmative towards it. Finally, practice has no alternative. We cannot lose our self-respect once we earn it. Therefore, we need to practice all our good virtues deliberately in order to live a life with high self-esteem.