

What would you attempt to do if you knew you couldn't fail?

to sum up convictions about being or becoming self-confident – what do you think of these ones underneath? ... Have you a good maxim yourself, or do you think any of these work well for you?

If I change my thoughts I can change my world

If it is to be, it's up to me

Always stop and think before you act

Learning is an active process and I learn by doing

Actions speak louder than words.

Do you know this old prayer? –

“Give me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.”

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Becoming self-confident – *how can we feel good about ourselves after brain injury?*

A brain injury can directly lead to us getting depressed or being tired too much, with a major impact on how we feel about ourselves, on our self-esteem.

Usually we'd feel confident when we have a purpose to life, feel loved, if we're doing well in our chosen role, have hope for the future and are content with who we were. A brain injury can impact on every one of those, so self-confidence is often a problem.

So what influences self-confidence?

The degree of understanding shown by people close to us and the reaction of the general public made a big difference to how we feel about ourselves. Families who understand the effects of brain injury and are supportive do play a major part in our feeling more confident.

Another factor is the possibility of us constantly comparing our current situations and brain injuries with how things were before the injury. That habit knocks away the chance to build self-confidence. Not coping with negative comments from other people is also a confidence-killer.

What can we do for confidence?

Without even yet forming a confidently good opinion about ourselves (but that's very handy!), body language is an important part of appearing confident and then of becoming confident. Here's how –
*keep eye contact with who you're talking to
have a straight body posture
talk calmly*

Making positive habits for communicating with other people usually brings good results for how those other people talk, behave and feel towards us!

Listen well to other people, but be friendly-frank to ask for more information when needed – maybe like “I don't follow – can you explain more clearly?”.

Interact and respond when other people are expressing their ideas and feelings, e.g. nodding or acknowledging that you're following what they're saying, as easily as in just commenting “I can see what you're getting at”.

Communicating well & warmly brings positive responses from other people, which works back for our own self-confidence.

Here are more ideas of things to do, each of which has proved effective in self-confidence for some of us –

+ Positively build up self-confidence:

- Choose to spend time with positive people, not negative people
- Become more self-aware and get rid of negative, unhealthy, unproductive thoughts
- Take up hobbies you will enjoy
- Set realistic goals and recognise small gains and achievements
- Learn problem-solving skills to handle the bad times
- Help someone else
- Practise relaxation
- Write a poem that has personal meaning for you
- Work on meeting new people and improving existing relationships
- Make a plan for keeping in contact with others, and do something social every week

