Low self esteem

The effects of low self esteem can create a vicious cycle of:

- Lack of confidence
- Poor performance
- Distorted view of self and others
- Unhappy personal life

Some ways to improve your self-esteem include:

**Acceptance**
Identify and accept your strengths and weaknesses - everyone has them!

**Encouragement**
Have a ‘can do’ attitude. Set a reasonable timetable for personal goals and offer yourself encouragement along the way.

**Praise**
Take pride in your achievements, both great and small. Remember your experiences are yours alone. Enjoy them!

**Help**
Set realistic goals. Meet them by learning new skills and developing your abilities.

**Time**
Take time out regularly to be alone with your thoughts and feelings. Get involved in activities you can enjoy by yourself, like crafts, reading or an individual sport. Learn to enjoy your own company.
Trust
Pay attention to your thoughts and feelings. Act on what you think is right. Do what makes you feel happy and fulfilled.

Respect
Don’t try to be someone else. Be proud of who you are. Explore and appreciate your own special talents.

Love
Learn to love the unique person you are. Accept and learn from your mistakes. Don’t overreact to errors. Accept your successes and failures - those who love you do.

How do you feel about yourself?
Assess your own level of self-esteem. Most people feel bad about themselves from time to time. So when answering these questions, think about how you feel most of the time.

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Are you easily hurt by criticism?</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Are you very shy or overly aggressive?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you try to hide your feelings from others?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Do you fear close relationships?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Do you find excuses for refusing to change?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Do you avoid new experiences?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Do you continually wish you could change your physical appearance?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Are you too modest about your personal success?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Are you glad when others fail?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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If you answered most of these questions ‘yes’ your self esteem could probably use a boost.

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