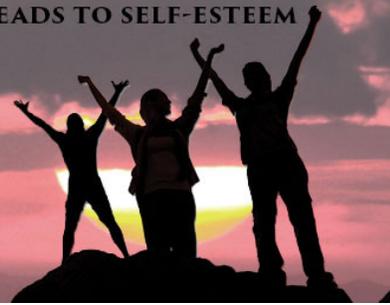


FEELING GOOD ABOUT YOU

THE JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY
THAT LEADS TO SELF-ESTEEM



Module 3 – Worksheet 3

Personal Power

***“Lord grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
the power to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.”***

Alcoholics Anonymous Serenity Prayer

It's a basic human need to feel you have some control and personal power over the events in your life. When you were a child this control may have been over things as small as whether you drank milk, juice, or water. As you matured the need for personal power grew to the point where now, as an adult, you want to have the final say in almost everything that affects you.

Unfortunately, at times other peoples' need for power and control may overwhelm your own, and you may give away your individual rights for the sake of peace and harmony, or to feel loved and appreciated. When this happens you may feel resentful, bitter, taken advantage of, angry, and impotent. If experienced often, these unpleasant feelings can erode self-esteem and undermine personal growth.

Sometimes people make the mistake of trying to regain control by focusing on changing those around them. This is usually a futile exercise, and one that will end in your feeling anxious and frustrated, since the reality is ***the only person you have control over is yourself.*** *Trying to change someone else puts you in the role of victim, since your happiness depends on the actions of others. The victim stance is one of being powerless. If you find yourself saying “everything would be fine if only he/she would.....” it's a sign you've given away your power and are concentrating on changing the wrong person.*

You can regain the feeling of strength and power by taking charge of the situation and stating your ideas, feelings, and needs, thereby exerting your personal power and improving your self-esteem. Even if the other person refuses to meet your needs, you can still take care of yourself by changing how you view the situation, what you expect, or removing yourself from it.

Some things you can do to maintain your personal power and strength are:

1. Look at all options available to you;
2. State your ideas, feelings and needs clearly to yourself and others;
3. Act to change, remove yourself from the situation, or accept responsibility for the decision if you choose to keep things as they are.

This worksheet is designed to help you look at areas in your life where you feel in control and strong, and areas where you may have purposefully or inadvertently given away your personal rights and power and are feeling victimized. Take a few minutes to think about when you feel strong and powerful, and when you feel at the mercy of others. Then write in the spaces below:

Where/When I feel strong and in control:

How do I feel about myself in these situations?

How does my body react when I feel powerful? (i.e. stand tall, hold head high, breathe deeply, etc.)

Where/When do I feel out of control, at the mercy of others?

How do I feel about myself in these situations?

How does my body react when I've given away my personal power? (i.e. poor posture, upset stomach, headache, clinched jaw, etc.)

What can I do to regain personal power in these situations?

Reflections on Personal Power

- You are a strong and powerful person.
- You are in charge of how you choose to respond to all events in your life
- You do not have the power to control or change others.
- If you try to change others, or you allow them to try to change you, you may feel anxious, frustrated and victimized.
- You can regain feelings of strength and personal power by taking charge of the situation and meeting your own needs in whatever way you can.