

Shine On!

*Switch on your own inner light
to create real success!*

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Remember, life should be a journey to
experience, to learn, to laugh and love.

I hope this book helps to ease your journey
and make it more joyful.

It's time to create a life you love!

Shine On!

We know from listening to the news and educators that self esteem is vital to healthy emotional and social growth for children. But it doesn't stop there. It is a deep psychological phenomenon that affects every one of us and all we do for *our entire lives*.

Entrepreneurs however, face unique challenges to their concept of personal self worth. It is vital to your personal well-being, as well as to the success of your business, to have a healthy sense of self esteem. Yet, we dedicate so little time to understanding and developing it. I am on a mission to change all of that.

**Self esteem can and is affecting your business
and your success.**

As I thought about how to focus this booklet, I considered what it was that I tend to find helpful in others seminars, speeches, books, webinars and so on. I myself, prefer when I am given a clear starting point, explanations and information and then ways to actually **use** the information I've been given. I don't have time for a lot of fluff! This is what I am going to try to do for you in a very straightforward, no nonsense way.

Our starting off point then will simply be clarifying what self esteem is and what it is not.

Ask the dictionary and you will get a response that is rather hollow in my eyes. Something along the lines of 'pride in oneself'. Okay, but how does that work or mean anything to you? Let's look at this concept in a little more depth, in simple, but *real* terms.

In fact, let's break it down to its very simplest terms.

Self Esteem is a phrase, made up of two distinct words. Looking at these two words separately will actually give us a much deeper meaning of the phrase itself.

1. **Self** which is defined by the dictionary as:

- ⇒ The total, essential, or particular being of one person; the individual.
- ⇒ The qualities of one person distinguishing him from another; personality or character; individuality
- ⇒ An individual's consciousness of his own being or identity

2. **Esteem** which is defined as:

- ⇒ To regard as a high order, think of with respect: to prize
- ⇒ To judge to be; regard as; consider
- ⇒ Favourable regard, respect

Read those again, look for key words (total, respect, identity, to prize) Is that painting a more vibrant picture for you yet?

Looking at this I tend to think that we really ought to call the whole concept the *Esteem for the Self* rather than Self Esteem.

The whole idea boils down to how we inwardly judge ourselves to be worthy of respect and care and that our intrinsic value is based on how we view our character and abilities.

The basis for these judgments is often skewed or distorted or even flat out wrong. But we will get into that little bit later.

For now let's examine what self esteem really looks like.

Self Esteem:

Is Not

- Arrogance
- Over estimating yourself
- Self importance
- Feelings of superiority
- Being stubborn in what and how you think
- Single mindedness

Self Esteem:

IS

- *A positive* outlook
- Sense of *purpose* that affirms you
- *Belief* that you are worthy of success and happiness
- Being comfortable with who you are and who you want to be
- Refusing to fear making mistakes or being wrong
- Embracing all that life offers with an open heart

Our Behavior

Our self esteem is reflected in our every day behaviors such as whether we show assertiveness, shyness, caution or confidence. It is reflected in our actions, but even more so in our *reactions*.

The fact is people with low self esteem more often engage in precarious behaviors, allow others to make choices for them and have a great deal of difficulty pulling themselves up when they have fallen into a dark place. Every single person on the planet has had, and will have, difficult times.

It's our reactions to these events that create our life.

These reactions often stem a great deal from what we feel is

our competency, what we believe we deserve and our perception of our own worth.

Self esteem includes how we view ourselves and our beliefs. Consider basic statements we tell ourselves that begin with "I am competent" or "I am not competent". Ask yourself that very question and take some time to examine your response. Where does the answer come from? *Your vision of your self worth*. This begets internal judgments that again affect self esteem.

Here is a very simplistic example of what I mean.

Rose is getting ready for her first presentation and her first ever speaking engagement. Understandably Rose is nervous.

If Rose has low self esteem she may start questioning 'who does she think she *is* trying to teach this stuff to other people?' After all, they probably know more than her and she might just lose all her credibility. She may even begin to feel as if she is about to make a fool out of herself. She worries she won't be able to answer a question or will forget what she is about to say. She begins to beat herself up for going out to a movie last weekend instead of practicing some more.

If Rose was exhibiting a higher level of self worth she may still feel nervous. After all, nervousness is totally natural and expected. However, her *reaction* and how she *chooses* to handle the butterflies she is feeling will be different.

Instead of beating herself up and making things worse for herself, she might take a deep breath to help calm her nerves. She reminds herself that she practiced; she knows this stuff and can handle any goof ups with a sense of humor. After all she thinks, mistakes are a great way to learn and imperfect presentations could be a great way to connect in a deeper way with the audience. She'll be more approachable.

Can you see why self esteem is vital for everyone, but even more so for the entrepreneur?

Entrepreneurs by nature have to put themselves out there, they take giant risks and they must believe they can succeed. They really need to be able to shine that inner light.

It is extremely important that entrepreneurs know what they stand for and are self aware in order to maintain their own integrity and self esteem during challenging times. There is no hiding behind your desk and pushing paperwork here! Try to imagine how you might react to a situation similar to our example of Rose and her presentation.

Our Emotions

Self Esteem is very much reflected in our emotions as well. Emotions such as pride, shame, despair or triumph. These reactions to events are often chosen based on what we feel or believe we deserve.

How would you react if someone told you that you did not deserve to be happy and successful? I would hope that you would be very offended and tell that person right away how you most certainly *do* deserve all of that and more.

And yet, so many of us have this little voice in our heads that tells us exactly that every single day! And we listen to it! We let it dim our inner light.

Too many of us feel we can only get so far and are always expecting 'the other shoe to drop' when good things are happening. Instead, we wait for a set back and then tell ourselves that we must have done something to deserve it.

This is another reflection of how we judge ourselves through our perception of self worth. How deeply we allow ourselves

to fall into and dwell in judgment is very much reflected in our self esteem.

Consider a situation where a person encounters a client who is very unhappy and is being obstinate about it. Even the best of us occasionally have to deal with someone who is just not pleasant. Some people focus on what they can do to re-assess and move them forward; while others focus on the failure and the self blame game. Many take this very personally and get discouraged. This sometimes happens when entrepreneurs don't know how to handle set backs or mistakes. It becomes very emotionally upsetting and often turned inward.

We all have thorny problems that we will need to grapple with, but entrepreneurs who don't learn and move forward afterwards don't succeed! If you own a business but don't believe you can be successful, you most likely will be right.

This follows a concept called 'Self-Fulfilling Prophecies'. What this means is if you tell yourself something often enough you begin to believe it to be the truth. Then, you tend to create the situations that fulfill your belief, thus reinforcing the belief. You turn off your own light over time rather than ramping it up.

I first discovered this concept when I was teaching children. There, we used it to help understand the great influence adults have on a child's self perception. Tell a child often enough that he is a certain way (good, bad, silly, kind, capable) and he will rise to meet that belief. Truly, if you act, or god forbid, tell a child that you think he or she is not good enough, soon you will see that they aren't.

We talk to ourselves and act out these self fulfilling prophecies all of the time, even as adults. Our beliefs and emotional reactions help create and fulfill our own self prophecies. If you believe you can only make XX amount of

dollars or that you'll have trouble finding clients you will probably get stuck there.

**Your thoughts create your reality
and this includes what you think of your Self.**

I hope at this point you have begun to consider and decide for yourself if you have a healthy self esteem or if perhaps need to start working in this area. (Not sure? See page 22)

Essentially, Self Esteem is our *personal evaluation* of our own worth and what we offer to society. It can have short term variances, but our general, *overall* view of our self worth is what we are really talking about here.

It doesn't take healthy self esteem to start a business, but it is most certainly needed to build one that is strong and makes money!

Why is that?

This is the question I try to answer for you here. It is a complex issue because we as humans are complex.

You can take control of your own self esteem and self worth.