

Who is in Charge Of Your Self-Worth?

WE OFTEN ENJOY the companionship of people who make us feel better about ourselves. With such people we are comfortable in our own skin, as we do not sense judgement or feel inferior. On the other hand, we tend to avoid people who diminish our confidence and make us conscious of who and how we are. It is only natural to feel this.

Self-worth is a much-talked-of phenomenon. According to the *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, self-worth 'is a sense of one's own value as a human being.' Who and what determines this value we give to ourselves? For example, do we value ourselves by the grades we receive in school, the group of friends we associate with, the position we hold in our career or how much wealth we have?

When our self-worth is primarily dependent on external factors, it is bound to be volatile. For our judgement is based on extraordinarily unknown and subjective parameters.

We live in a society that values popularity, numbers, and figures. While these help in calculating the impact of the work done, it has a severe flip side too. For example, if someone wishes to hold a seminar on an important subject and only 25 people show up of an expected 200, would the speaker feel disappointed? Most likely yes, and this may shake the



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speaker's self-worth. On the other hand, if 500 people show up, would this increase the speaker's self-worth?

Self-worth questions our whole identity. If our worth is dependent on external achievements, such as the turnout of the audience at a seminar, our self-worth would be like the British weather, unpre-

dictable!

The trouble is that the society we live in has spread this notion that our happiness and self-worth is dependent on statistics. If I top my class, it makes me feel that I am respected and admired for achieving the highest marks, then my self-worth will fluctuate based on my results. The moment I fail to top my class, I create a scenario within myself where I feel I have lost the respect and admiration of others. I have simply lost part of my self-worth. The problem is not with being ambitious and result driven.

The problem is the attachment to that goal. We should strive for top marks as this is an independent variable based on our efforts – and not for the validation of others. If we can be happy and feel good about ourselves irrespective of the outcome, then our self-worth is internally fuelled. We develop and function through inner confidence and empowerment. If our goal is to please others and seek their approval, we are not living our lives on our terms.

When our life and self-worth rely on others finding us worthy, we become puppets in the hands of others and move as per their directions. To determine our self-worth, we need to create our vision board with our long-term goals in all aspects of our life. It is essential to know our dreams and the reason for having those dreams. These reasons must match the kind of life we are looking to live and stay focussed on the bigger picture, and not be swayed by the way we want others to view us. Then we not only become more aware of what we want from our life, but also take responsibility for our self-worth.

When our self-worth comes from within ourselves, no other person can tamper with it. **BW**

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