

Grief Support Newsletter

St. Francis
REFLECTIONSSM
Lifestage Care

Creating Healthy Self Esteem

If you want to cultivate a healthier self-esteem, consider the following suggestions as a helpful guide. These recommendations may also guide you to think of other ideas and steps that would be meaningful on your journey.

- Cutting out negative self-talk- Learn to recognize, name, and stop negative self-talk. Negative self-talk is the ways we think and speak to ourselves in a way that puts us down. Examples may include “I can’t seem to get anything right” or “I’m just not good enough.” When moments of negative self-talk pop up, notice it and stop it in its tracks. It is possible to stop negative thinking before it gets worse. Consider the patterns and triggers that lead to negative self-talk. Ask yourself how you can change the habit or redirect your thoughts in a more positive way.
- Make healthy choices for yourself- Positive Self-Esteem comes from the decisions you make about yourself and what you value. It comes less from feeling good about yourself and more from your thoughts and actions, which can impact your feelings. For example: I am going to exercise more because I want to honor my body and be healthy. Here, the choice to exercise is not rooted in shame but the choice to see self-worth. Then when the individual acts on their commitment to exercise, they are more likely to feel better about themselves.
- Honor your feelings- Having a high self-esteem means recognizing that your thoughts, feelings, wishes are important and worth taking seriously. Consider getting in touch with your inner self and listen to what is going on in your head and in your heart. Try expressing yourself to others instead of withholding. Tell others what you think, feel, want, etc. Do this in a way that does not hurt/attack others but honors their feelings as well.
- Positive Relationships- Cultivate and seek out healthy relationships with people who build you up. By having people in your life who support you, affirm you, and practice honesty, you are more likely to see your own value and grow your self-esteem. Seek out people who both give and receive. Sometimes, people may take more than they give, which can drain those around them. Other people can do too much for you, but they may not be seeking to help you long term. You are deserving of relationships that find a healthy balance between giving and receiving.
- Be kind towards yourself- It is harder to extend grace to ourselves than almost anyone else. The truth is that no one is perfect. Mistakes are made and life doesn’t turn out the way you expect. Instead of focusing on the mistakes, practice offering yourself grace. Instead of being hard on yourself, practice accepting yourself as valuable and worthy of love and kindness.



Some Suggestions for 'Next Steps'

1. If you continue to find your time of grief very hard to deal with and you sense the need for further help, we encourage you to consider one or both of the following steps.

~ Ask for help in evaluating and understanding your situation. Seek out someone who is especially skilled in helping a bereaved person, e.g., a member of the clergy, professional counselor, or therapist.

~ Look into becoming a member of a group experience for bereaved persons. It is common for persons who are a year or so past the death of a loved one to find that they are now ready to join with others who are going through similar experiences.

2. If you have succeeded in coming through your time of grief or nearly so, you may be interested in steps like the following:

~ Write about your experience, stating what it was like for you, what helped you the most, and what did not help you as you worked through your loss. You may find that you will want to share what you have written with others.

~ Look into other opportunities for investing some of your ability, time, and energy in some worthwhile undertaking. Becoming a St. Francis Reflections Lifestage Care volunteer is a possibility. This may involve taking some specialized training or sharpening up some skills you already have.

3. Regardless of where you are in your own experience of grief, we hope you will remember some of the steps we have been emphasizing in these mailings.

~ Make moves deliberately designed to enhance your self-image and self-esteem. Whatever you can do to help you look better and feel better is appropriate to do. You DO deserve to be one of the main sources of sunshine in your own life.

~ Take good care of yourself. Is it time for a good medical checkup, emotional checkup, or a beauty checkup? Is it time for a trip to some favorite spot, or to invite someone to come see you?

~ Be considerate and patient with yourself. Learn not to expect unfair things of yourself.

We hope some of these ideas work for you or that these suggestions encourage you to take steps that are right for you. If you need additional support, resources or would like to reach out to speak with a grief coordinator please contact us at 321-269-4240. **BEST WISHES!**

