



## THE DANCE OF CONFIDENCE



I have enjoyed listening to live music for years and had always wanted to dance but my lack of confidence kept me close to the bar. One night, upon declining a request for a dance, I decided to change this. The following week I started dance lessons. That simple acquisition of new skills created the confidence to move from the bar to the dance floor.

Confidence is the feeling or belief that one can rely on something or someone. It gets us places that we never would have got to without it. Confidence when mixed with a dose of enthusiasm is magnetic and attractive. Whether a manager leading a meeting, a sales representative calling on a prospect, a hopeful candidate for a new job; confidence on our part inspires confidence in others and creates winning situations.

Some are naturally confident. Others struggle with it. And most, if not all of us have seasons of life where we question ourselves as to whether we have what it takes to embark on the next challenge facing us.

Here are some thoughts for living in or acquiring confidence.

- Understand your strengths and operate in them as much as possible.
- List your successes and accomplishments that you have achieved in any area of life - whether from last year, this month or today. Keep a growing list that you can use as a reminder.
- Ensure you have people around you who are encouragers, supporters - who cheer you on.
- Some, in order to boost their own confidence can invariably denigrate you. Communicate directly to them that this is unacceptable and if they don't change, remove them from your relational sphere or minimise contact.
- Constantly be challenging yourself in activities that will stretch you. The accomplishment of small feats lead to greater ones. The confidence from acquiring and mastery of new skills cannot be underestimated.
- Focusing on what we have done well today boosts our confidence for tomorrow.
- Get control of your world. When we feel in control we feel increasingly confident.
- Reward yourself for small accomplishments. Whether a walk in the park, a coffee, new item purchase etc.
- Review the past. The baggage we carry today (the positive and negative) are the bags we have collected from our yesterdays. Seek to locate the negative contributions to your world and discard.
- Confidence is from the inside out. Confident people walk and talk more authoritatively and assertively. The internal affecting the external. However, at times we might need to apply external nutrients to the 'confidence tree' to further its growth. Ask the question "what makes me feel confident?" Is it particular clothing; certain music; driving a certain car; living in a particular style of home; dining in certain restaurants and so forth?
- Seek help. Therapists and counsellors can be really helpful as sounding boards - both in the tough and good times.

What are the things that you want to achieve and grow into – to master, to conquer? Choose one area and then day by day practice the skills necessary. It will give you mastery over the subject and the confidence to increasingly progress forward.

The safety of the bar does not compare to the thrill of the dance floor.

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