

Self-Regard refers to how we see ourselves - both our strengths, and our weaknesses, or opportunities for growth.

People with a very high level of Self-Regard tend to have a very positive self-image. They don't often question or doubt their judgments, and may feel that they know the right answer, or the right course of action, most of the time.

On the other hand, people with a lower level of Self-Regard will generally doubt themselves. They'll be unsure of their skills and abilities and may come across as lacking confidence. They will also tend to be less satisfied with who they are as a person. They may be very self-critical and indulge in a great deal of negative self-talk.

When you think of your own Self-Regard, do you see yourself as high level, or lower level? Self-Regard depends a great deal on the conversations you have with yourself - the voice inside your head. And as the old joke goes, if you're wondering what I mean about the voice inside your head, THAT'S the voice inside your head!

Here's an interesting question to ask yourself: if the voice inside your head was a real person, would you choose to spend time with them? Why would you, or why wouldn't you? You'd be surprised how many people fight a constant, uphill battle against the negativity of the voice inside their head.

For most people Self-Regard is a mixed thing. We may feel good about ourselves in some areas or situations, and less good in others. Self-Regard is a very complex subject, and ties into our mental self-images - how we see ourselves physically, socially, and professionally. We may feel strong and capable in situations where we're comfortable, but in less familiar situations our insecurity and uncertainty may come to the fore. This situational aspect of Self-Regard is worth

exploring. By understanding why we feel more comfortable in some situations than others, we can begin to figure out what specific elements are at play.

Here are three reflective questions you can use to explore your Self-Regard.

1. Make a list of the 10 personal characteristics that you are most proud of, and another a list of the 10 personal characteristics that you are least proud of. What has contributed to the development of these characteristics? If there was one characteristic in the 'least proud of' list that you would like to change, which one is it, and why?
2. Imagine that the voice inside your head is a real person. Would you choose to spend time with that person? Why, or why not? What is it about this 'person' that you like or dislike?
3. What are the situations or settings where you feel more comfortable? Why? Consider both work and home when you do this.

There are things you can do to build your own Self-Regard:

1. When someone pays you a compliment, do not dismiss it or deflect it. Instead, say something like: "That's very kind of you to say that. I appreciate it!"
2. When you indulge in negative self-talk, picture a big 'STOP' sign in your head. Tell yourself: "This is not helping in any way," and deliberately think of something else.
3. At the end of each day, make a list of what went well that day and why, and what did not go well, and why. What was your role in these events?

Working With Others

Working with people who have a lower level of Self-Regard can be a challenge - they may feel that their work is not good enough, they may seek constant reassurance, and they may not take even small risks for fear of failure.

Here are three things you can do to work effectively with people who have a lower level of Self-Regard:

1. Be as supportive as possible - provide positive feedback that's specific and detailed so that they can tell it's genuine and deserved.
2. Allow them to direct their own work as much as possible. This will help them to develop confidence in their abilities.
3. If you need to contradict them or provide constructive feedback, be specific, and do it in the most respectful way you can.

People with a very high level of Self-Regard pose a different challenge - sure of themselves, their opinions, and decisions, in almost every setting, they find it hard to accept any kind of constructive feedback or input. And if things do go wrong, they'll have a tendency to blame external factors: - it couldn't possibly be their fault.

Here are three things you can do to work effectively with people who have a high level of Self-Regard:

1. Understand that they will usually think their ideas are best; so, if you need to contradict or question their approaches, be ready for them to push back.
2. Choose your battles - if they have a different way of doing something, but it achieves the required result, let them do it their way.
3. If their behaviour is negatively affecting you, explain this to them - preferably in a one-on-one conversation. Tell them the impact they're having on you, and why it's affecting you that way. In many cases, they simply won't have realized the negative impact they are having.