

Psychology of self-confidence
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“ You attract what you are and create your life to reflect this.”¹

“To empower – to birth power from within; the ability to be, the capacity to act, and the capability to do it with vigor, force, strength, determination, comfort and happiness.”²

“Key to empowerment – making your wanting more known both to yourself and others and let it have more presence in the universe.”³

In a society that is oriented on external feedback and powerful ideas of how we should live, self-confidence is often replaced with low self-esteem. Understanding what we want and how to believe in those desires without embarrassment or apology is key to cultivating self-confidence. How is the psychology of self-confidence explored at the ‘Empowering Yourself’ program at the Option Institute? What techniques and constructs are used to cultivate one’s wants? Why would one choose to explore these concepts? In what way does being ‘empowered’ serve the individual and humanity?

¹ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june 2005

² Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june 2005

³ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june 2005

How is the psychology of self-confidence explored at the 'Empowering Yourself' program at the Option Institute? "I am who I am right now – not my history."⁴ To understand self-confidence or the act of being empowered begins by looking at oneself with honesty, non-judgment and the awareness that we are not our history and that we are recreating ourselves in every instant. The 'self-studentship' encouraged at Options requires self-awareness, self-acknowledgment, self-acceptance and self-understanding and the willingness to change. The basis of empowerment is to choose and move towards all our wants. Personally, instead of moving away from what I don't want – feeling angry and dissatisfied in my marriage I chose to move towards what I did want: a deeper relationship with my husband

"Think it, believe it, and it happens."⁵ After self-studentship the 'Empowering Yourself' program dives deeply into exploring the power of identifying 'wants' and the beliefs around those 'wants'. The premise lies in the idea of knowing what we want with absolute clarity in every situation allows for greater authenticity and greater power in actualizing this want. I realized this powerfully through experiencing many physical symptoms of pain in my body, thinking I could feel totally pain free, believing this was possible and then miraculously experiencing the pain symptom fully disappear! I repeated this 'experiment' many times with the same incredible result thus anchoring an empowering belief that I can fully choose my level of wellness and achieve it.

⁴ Notes from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, June 2005

⁵ Notes from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, June 2005

What techniques and constructs are used to cultivate one's wants? "A visionary waits for reality to catch up to her dreams."⁶ Self-confidence or being empowered has in itself some basic constructs beginning with being more daring, unrealistic and unreasonable. The ability to think for oneself and to be infinitely creative in creating the life one truly wants is activated through being daring to dream big, "The empowered person wants passionately (without embarrassment or apology)."⁷ This leads to challenging disempowering thoughts/beliefs and replacing them with empowering thoughts/beliefs. An example of dreaming big and believing in the realization of this dream is seen with my choice to openly ask for \$100 000 from one of the participants who's dream was to be a multi-millionaire, she agreed to give me the money.

"Disempowering others happens when we do not want them to be embarrassed, sad, angry, etc."⁸ Another 'empowerment' concept lies in how individuals disempower the people in their lives through 'care taking'. Attempting to make an individual feel reassured and safe is an example of caretaking and thoroughly disempowering for the individual. Empowering oneself and others begins with being authentic and with understanding and accepting oneself and others exactly as they are. By allowing my partner to be exactly as he is without needing him to

⁶ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june 2005

⁷ Hand out for Empowering yourself Seminar, Option Institution & Fellowship, june/05

⁸ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june 2005

change in anyway while moving towards what I want (instead of away from what I don't want) is both empowering to my partner and myself.

“What is being empowered and stating a new ‘empowered way to be’ going to mean to the relationship?”⁹ This question was given as homework as a way to identify where in our lives we feel disempowered. Once we could identify this area we could change the experience to an empowered experience by directly and authentically communicating this understanding to the person involved in this area. I achieved this by calling my husband and telling him that I occasionally felt disempowered in our marriage. I explained that from now on when he chose to be angry and project his problems unto me I would no longer play along and instead I would simply love and accept him for being the angry victim of that moment. Much to my surprise my husband thought this would be fantastic.

“To stay empowered never judge yourself.”¹⁰ A fundamental empowerment concept is that of non-judgment, first with oneself and then with others. By allowing ourselves to fully accept who we are and all our choices, even if we deem ourselves to have behaved in a ‘less than acceptable manner’ is truly freeing and empowering. The more we practice non-judgment, the more we are free to truly examine our motives and reasons for judging in the first place. By accepting that I was creating unhappiness and anger in my marriage I was able to see that it simply my way to take care of myself and through this clarity I was

⁹ Homework for Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june/05

¹⁰ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Clyde, june/05

able to choose to take care of myself by going for what I truly wanted which was more love and kindness in the relationship. “The greatest act of love is to tell your partner what you really think.”¹¹

“Dreaming the dream with passion and conviction includes taking action which is vital to realizing the dream.”¹² Once we have dreamed up our wants, believed we could get those wants, conviction and the ability to act while exercising detachment from the outcome give energy to realizing those wants. These concepts are important to fuel the dream to become reality. A dream or want remains that until it is acted upon. The beauty in this is the understanding that it is the process of going for the dream that is life-enhancing versus the attainment of the actual goal. By bringing more love and acceptance into my marriage while allowing the possibility that nothing could change gave me the miraculous experience of more love, more intimacy and more passion with my husband.

Why would one choose to explore these concepts? “I love to do the best version of everything I do.”¹³ Self-confidence, the ability to feel empowered outside of circumstance is a way to total personal freedom and happiness. By exploring all the ways in which we dis-empower ourselves and others as well as all the ways in which we can live our dreams lends to changing the belief that life is a struggle to life is a generous and creative process. Empowered people are inspiring and

¹¹ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june/05

¹² Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june/05

¹³ Quote from Empowering yourself Seminar at Options with Bears Kaufman, june/05

able to contribute to humanity in ways that stretch the current level of acceptable reality. Being unrealistic is how we now enjoy electricity, phones, computers, flying, and all those wonderful modern commodities. By defying realistic laws empowered people are living examples of the power of a benevolent universe. “The empowered person seeks possibilities, not limits.”¹⁴

Since everything at Option is make-believe based instead of truth based this encourages people to be self-reliant, self-creative and self-referring, thus cultivating self-confidence. This psychology of empowerment lends to noticing what one is doing in the moment it is being done, identifying any possible disempowering beliefs associated with the activity and then creating a new belief in an instant. I had a very specific experience where I was experiencing a possible yeast infection. I noticed my thoughts and changed them to believing I was healthy and filled with kindness and the infection disappeared.

In what way does being ‘empowered’ serve the individual and humanity? “The empowered person lives ‘YES’ rather than ‘maybe or ‘no’.”¹⁵ Empowered people are full of joy and full of potential. They are able to inspire themselves and dream outside of the ‘realistic’ box. These self-confident people have far greater energy and creativity to thus contribute to their families, friends and communities. If humanity experienced happy, infinitely creative people perhaps global issues of pollution, poverty, and war could be resolved in ways not yet dreamed of. The

¹⁴ Hand out for Empowering yourself Seminar, Option Institution & Fellowship, June/05

¹⁵ Hand out for Empowering yourself Seminar, Option Institution & Fellowship, June/05

human potential is so vast and yet untapped. The 'empowering yourself' program is one way to immerse oneself in a new 'unrealistic', 'make-believe' world. In this place individuals challenge self-limiting beliefs and give birth to their infinite creative self, a gift that many spiritual teachings speak of yet rarely deliver.