



Self-reflection...how much is too much?

Doesn't it seem a little crazy that there are so many messages saying, "You deserve the best, just do what you want!" and yet, so many people feel miserable and alone? It seems that all this 'me' focus can work against 'me'. Being self-absorbed often results in becoming overly critical of self as well as others, a common trait for many people who experience low moods. One sure way to feel 'happier' and to model resilience for children is to be more 'other focused', teaching them to take an active interest in others, as well as themselves.

Self-absorption and self-worth

The self-help industry has grown tremendously in recent years and while there is certainly good reason for striving to be your best self, there is also a danger of believing that if things aren't going well you must not be trying hard enough or thinking positively enough. Looking for 'flaws' can become a preoccupation, resulting in feelings of low self-worth and disconnection from those around you. If you're critical of yourself you're almost sure to be critical of others too; not the best foundation for building stronger relationships.

Turn your back to the mirror

In his best-selling book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie shares strategies that are guaranteed to increase feelings of self-worth. Not surprisingly, although they relate to how we deal with others, they can be equally applied to interactions with self.

1. Don't criticise, condemn or complain. 2. Give honest, sincere appreciation. 3. Become genuinely interested in other people (allow them to do the same for you!). If you've been in the habit of focusing on what you don't do well or where you feel you need to improve and it's leaving you feeling miserable and isolated, make a commitment to realise your strengths. Listen to what your children, friends and colleagues say about you and **give yourself permission to feel good about the person you are right now**. When you do this, you help your family to recognise and build on their strengths too, resulting in more connection and better moods all round!

Bare Hands is run by allied health professionals committed to helping women embrace positive change by providing access to practical education. To find out more give us a call, email us or visit www.barehands.com.au.

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- ✓ Too much focus on self can leave you feeling isolated and low.
- ✓ Honest, sincere appreciation builds strong relationships.
- ✓ Listen to your family and friends when they say, "You're the best!"

"You can't stay in your corner of the forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes."

A.A. Milne, Winnie-the-Pooh

Did you find this helpful? Want more strategies like this...

Then you might love this **Sticky Strategy**, which will help you see the glass half full, decrease conflict and manage unwanted behaviours in others. You'll find it here... **Sticky Strategies** or join the weekly **blog** for more helpful tips **here**.



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Practical life strategies for women