# What is Self-Esteem?

### Defining Self-Esteem

While some texts and teachers will tell you that self-esteem and confidence are different, they do admit to an overlap while trying to keep them separate. We’re inclined to agree with the dictionary (Oxford in this case) which defines them as practically the same. As a result, we are going to discuss self-esteem and self-confidence as largely the same thing: your perception of your abilities and your beliefs about yourself.

### Characteristics of low self-esteem can include the following:

* Social withdrawal
* Bouts of sadness
* Anxiety and/or emotional turmoil
* Lack of social skills (i.e. meeting people easily, making small talk, establishing relationships quickly and easily)
* Depression
* Eating disorders
* Difficulty accepting compliments
* Focusing on negative things or ideas (in other words, pessimism)
* Self-neglect
* Excessive focus on what other people think of you
* Treating yourself poorly, but not other people
* Lack of confidence in trying new things
* Reluctance to indulge your desires
* Reluctance to trust your own opinions, or share them with others