



Words are engines igniting emotions which produce behavior. The words are like building blocks laying a foundation about how we feel about ourselves. This foundation starts getting laid early in life. In childhood, one of the most influential people in our lives is our parents. They speak words to encourage or discourage us. Our parents speak many words to us both negative and positive. These words influence our self-esteem or our mental portrait of ourselves.

A mental image that we have in our mind. It will demonstrate if we believe ourselves to be worthy.

<https://www.mind.org.uk>.

Summarizing self-esteem is feeling confident in your own abilities and feeling loved.

In my childhood, my parents spoke a lot of negative words sparking feelings of unworthiness, despair, sadness, hopelessness, and feeling unloved. I was a lonely child with few friends. I spent the majority of my time in my bedroom sleeping or reading. I spent years overcoming these feelings and behaviors. Of course my parents loved me but words are powerful. Therefore my self-esteem was low.

Let's explore how some of these negative statements affected me starting in my childhood. Living in a small rural town in West Virginia, I had few friends. My mother was a hard working woman but was self-absorbed. She loved to sit on the phone and gossip with her friends. She did not like being interrupted by my brother, Jeff or I. My father was intelligent, hard working, and expected perfection especially in school from his children. He did not allow Jeff or I to receive compliments. He was fearful that we would become prideful.

My father was explaining a math assignment to me. He explained it once and I didn't understand. After the second explanation and me not understanding, he yelled, "Are you really that dumb?" Another time, I brought home my report card. I had four A's and one B. He stated, "What happened, you couldn't get all A's?"

An example with my mother, she tells me, "Jeff is much smarter than you. He has the IQ of a low genius." After hearing all of these comments, I was sad. I felt rejected. Many times I would cry, then I would be sent to my bedroom.

It caused me to have problematic behaviors, such as difficulty trusting people, mood swings, and maintaining inner peace. In addition, I had difficulty keeping relationships.

Finally, I decided to go on a journey to discover the reason for my fluctuating moods, failed relationships, difficulty with intimacy, and maintaining inner peace.



The first thing I did was to find a good listener . It was a close friend but it could have been a therapist. When you find someone, make certain to have good rapport and to trust them. Make certain this person is a good listener. It is someone that you trust and respect. During your talks, train yourself to: look at the situation, what were your thoughts and your reactions during the incident that you are discussing . During the talk , verbalize what could have produced stress or anxiety. A good conversation can uncover hidden thoughts and feelings .The listener does not need to have a lot of dialogue .Their main function is to listen and ask the right questions to provoke thought about your thoughts and feelings .

My next step on my journey to discover myself was journaling. A journal can be kept for various reasons .My journal monitored my thoughts and feelings so I could really get to know myself. In our fast paced world ,do we really know ourselves? Many times something makes us angry or sad ,”we ’stuff the feeling’ . We do not try to figure out where that feeling came from so we keep reacting or overreacting the same old way. I was really tired of not knowing the reason for my feelings and behaviors,so I started journaling .I wanted to make positive changes in my life . These were the journal rules that I made for myself. Night time was the best time for me to write

about the day's events . I attempted to write on a daily basis but was not always successful. I dated and timed my entries to be able to go back and check progress or lack of progress. I wrote about my daily events. I made a special attempt to write if I felt any extreme emotions such as anger, hurt feelings ,embarrassment , sadness ,etc . This exercise was successful in helping me identify my feelings and their triggers . When journaling ,it is important to decide the reason for keeping a log .Then ,set up any rules that you would like . It is for your benefit and use .I felt my journal was beneficial in helping me get to know myself .

Words are powerful .They do trigger emotions and behaviors . By talking to a close friend ,it took a lot of time talking about various situations but it was worth seeing the changes in my emotions and behaviors.. I was able to form a clearer picture of myself in my mind .. It was such a healing experience, I learned to trust people .I learned that I could be loved . I was able to identify my feelings and their triggers . This was a good process ; I start making friends and to got to know myself .