

Mentoring Module

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF

There is a huge difference between Self-Importance and The Importance of Self. The former can be defined as an inflated feeling of pride in your superiority to others; the latter is all about valuing and respecting yourself. All of us have had the experience of people who consider themselves to be ‘holier than thou’ with an exaggerated opinion of their own importance, and the reason we have had that experience is that there are so many of them around.



Whether based on an inferiority complex or even one of superiority is not the issue for this module. The fact remains that often when people attain success and wealth their head swells with it all and before they know it, they start to lose it all again. And the people they have put down as being not as important as them, they inevitably meet again on their way down and are surprised at the lack of support they receive.

The most important communication is to make others feel valued. And as self-communication is an important tool to success, it is important to value our self. Let us review just 2 elements relating to the importance of your own self:

1. In your life you are your own Managing Director with a life-time contract to perform to the best of your ability – that is to seek out those opportunities that are conducive to releasing your potential, harnessing your strengths and developing your skills. That is a highly responsible, and important task.
2. In your life you employ yourself as your own employee with an expectation to deliver whatever it takes to fulfil your responsibilities, whether it is providing food and shelter for your nearest and dearest; working all hours to finish what you have started; figuring out how to overcome the challenges that arise, or fulfilling your role to the best of your ability. That too is a highly responsible and important task.

Life isn't easy and very often because we make it difficult by our wrong actions in relation to our self. Take for example the following scenario. In your area of business imagine you are invited to dinner with the *most admired* individual of your industry – a person you want to listen to when they speak.

You notice that you and your peer group treat the individual with utmost respect and attention, in the knowledge that it has been well earned and rightly received. The individual sets an example in professional behaviour or artistic merit. It is clear that they value themselves and have taken the right actions accordingly, thus making life easier for themselves.



Now imagine that as this individual is sharing an answer to a question, a late arrival joins the dinner, interrupting to explain the lateness, complaining either about the traffic or blaming something other than their own tardiness. A moment later the late arrival draws a communication device from a pocket to check if there have been any messages received while rushing behind schedule. Has the late arrival made life harder for themselves – and are they aware of it? How do you feel about the interruption? You were on time and it was your question the admired individual was responding to when interrupted. What is your level of respect for the late arrival?



The real question is: Does the late arrival's actions state that there is little value or respect for the peer group? Or is it that the late arrival holds little respect or value for his or her own self? The answer is both as they are closely inter-related. You could say that the late arrival has the T-Shirt for it.

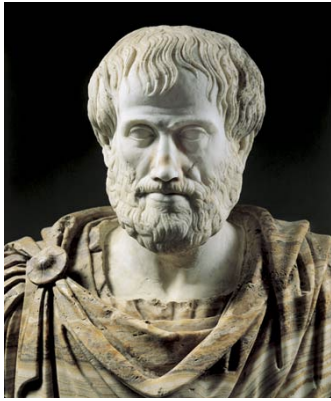
The point is that a respected individual earns respect because of the level of their own self-respect. Our greatest treasure is our own self-respect that too often remains hidden or unwisely lost. When we invest our treasure wisely it influences both our behaviour and actions accordingly.

The best way to invest that treasure is to serve ourselves first. That does not mean taking first, it means putting ourselves in order first. It means understanding 4 tenets:

1. Knowing that whatever you do either moves you towards what you want; or away from what you want.
2. Knowing what is really important to you and why you value it as you do.
3. Knowing that only you can develop what is really important to you.
4. Knowing that only by developing your own self are you able to express the value you hold for what is important to you.

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Aristotle's Law of Expression states: *That whatever you express, you impress; whatever you impress, you express.* In other words: What you say about yourself, you internalize; what you internalize through your belief, thinking, practice and habits, you will reveal to the world through your behaviour and actions.

There are 3 questions to ask to test the importance of your self and how much you value and respect yourself:

1. Am I really fulfilling my role effectively and to the very best of my ability?
2. What kind of business success would I enjoy if everyone involved with it performed like me?
3. What latent potential do I have that I have not yet tapped into, which if I do, will raise my game?

Building a business is an expression of your belief in yourself and how much you value what you do. A successful business has accomplished the art of valuing others, because the purpose of a business is to attract and retain customers. Retention is key and loyalty is gained when customers feel valued. Value and importance go hand in hand. When the moment arrives that your business is providing the life-style you want, then the importance of your self has been well expressed in your business. When the time arrives to sell your business and start new ventures you take with you all the wealth of experience that building the business had impressed into you.

Whatever you do is an expression of you, whether in your professional or personal life. Life becomes easier in direct proportion to the more you value yourself.

Success will always reap more success. All out massive action will still always be required to building relationships and following through – as that is what business building demands – but the real secret is for the business builder to understand that the person that makes it happen is you – you are the builder, of everything that holds meaning and value to you, and that is the importance of yourself.



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