

### Career Experts Group Monthly Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2024 -

## "EMPOWER & ACHIEVE: NURTURING SELF-ESTEEM AND EMBRACING SUCCESS"

Newsletter Editor: Denise Bitler

"Remove 'shoulds' from your vocabulary this year. Start your journey of self-love now."  
- Gandhi



Welcome to our February newsletter, themed "Empower & Achieve: Nurturing Self-Esteem and Embracing Success." In this edition, we dive into a variety of enriching topics designed to bolster your confidence and pave the way for triumph in both personal and professional spheres.

Our articles explore the transformative power of an impactful cover letter, the significance of maintaining motivation during your job search, and the importance of cultivating a strong personal brand. We also delve into the art of positive goal resetting, offering insights on how to adapt and thrive during life's inevitable changes.

Additionally, we have a Fun Special Feature celebrating Valentine's Day: a Speaker's Bio for Cupid, adding a touch of joy and festivity to this month's edition! Each piece in this newsletter provides actionable advice and encouragement, aiming to inspire and equip you with the tools to nurture your self-esteem and embrace your successes. Join us on this empowering journey and discover strategies to achieve your full potential. Happy reading!

Don't miss out on your chance to win the next "Elevate Your Career with an Expert" newsletter subscriber drawing on April 3, 2024. To learn more about this raffle and how to enter, check out [page 14](#).

For more career-focused information, insights, and inspiration, visit the Career Experts Group website at [www.careerexpertsgroup.com](http://www.careerexpertsgroup.com).

***We've got you covered wherever you are in your career journey.***

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### **Career Industry News/Trends**

A COVER LETTER CAN SET YOU APART FROM THE COMPETITION

### **Job Finding Strategies**

OUT-OF-THE-BOX JOB SEARCH TIPS

### **Career Advice**

STAYING MOTIVATED ON

MONDAYS:

NAVIGATING THE JOB SEARCH JOURNEY

### **Building Your Brand**

ELEVATE YOUR PERSONAL BRAND,

ELEVATE YOUR CAREER:  
THE POWER OF MINDSET

### **Special Features**

EMBRACING A FRESH START:

THE ART OF POSITIVE GOAL  
RESETTING

### **Ask the Experts**

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### **Holiday Highlights**

INTERNATIONAL BOOST

SELF-ESTEEM MONTH

&

INTERNATIONAL EXPECT

SUCCESS MONTH

### **Holiday Special Feature**

CUPID - SPEAKER BIO

### **Elevate Your Career with an Expert**

QUARTERLY DRAWING

### **Learning Tools**

CEG YOUTUBE CHANNEL

CEG RESOURCE DOCUMENTS

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## A COVER LETTER CAN SET YOU APART FROM THE COMPETITION

When applying for jobs, you may see the phrase “cover letter optional” and decide to skip that step. However, if you are not including a cover letter as part of your application, you are reducing your chances of being noticed by hiring managers. Writing a cover letter requires additional time and energy, but that extra step could be the very thing that makes you stand out from other candidates.

Not convinced? Here are a few statistics to consider.

According to a 2019-20 [ResumeGo](#) survey of 236 recruiters and hiring managers:

- 87% stated that they read cover letters, and 65% said that cover letters played a role in deciding who they interviewed and hired.
- Candidates who completed applications with cover letters that were tailored to the position had a 53% higher callback rate than those without a cover letter.

A 2023 study of 625 hiring managers by [Resume Genius](#) provides additional incentive:

- Of hiring managers surveyed, 45% read an applicant’s cover letter before reviewing their resume.
- Additionally, 49% believe that a strong cover letter can convince them to interview an “otherwise weak” candidate.



### STEPS FOR WRITING A COVER LETTER WITH IMPACT:

A cover letter should be less than one page in length. Employers aren’t looking for a repetition of your resume; they want to see highlights of your strengths and accomplishments. It’s important that your letter is personalized and targeted for each position – particularly its requirements and qualifications.

For context, a fictitious cover letter for a teaching position follows, which has been broken down into sections that correspond to each step.

#### Step 1: Introduction

Explain which position you are applying for, where you learned about the job opening, and why you believe you are the right candidate for the job. You also want to communicate your excitement and enthusiasm for the position and company – employers want to hear why you want to work for them.

*“As an educator with a passion for encouraging student creativity and self-expression, I was excited to see your position for a teacher at ABC School posted on SchoolSpring.com. ABC School’s reputation for its commitment to academic excellence is exceeded only by its dedication to community engagement and inclusion. I would bring excellent curriculum development experience and presentation skills to this position, as well as the ability to hit the ground running.”*

#### Step 2: Your Value Proposition

Describe how your skills match the qualifications and requirements outlined in the job description.

*“I have nearly five years of experience educating middle school-aged children, as well as leading homework groups and creating exciting classroom projects like [describe some projects here]. I also have developed a reputation for successful partnerships with families, schools, and the community, including introducing new communication strategies at the XYZ School to engage parents. I enjoy using technology, such as [name of software programs], to ignite students’ understanding and exploration.”*



## A COVER LETTER CAN SET YOU APART FROM THE COMPETITION (CONTINUED)

### Step 3: How You Fit

Provide an overview of your work style and personality, as it applies to the job description and employment setting.

*"I am a caring teacher who enjoys working with adolescents and supporting them to discover themselves and the world around them. I work effectively with students, faculty, and administrators from diverse backgrounds, learning styles, and life experiences."*

### Step 4: Conclusion

Wrap up the letter with a statement showing your enthusiasm for the job and your "call to action."

*"I welcome the opportunity to join ABC School and to further its mission of creating an exciting and robust learning environment for its students. I look forward to meeting you to discuss my qualifications in more detail. I can be reached at (222) 123-4567 or myname@email.com."*

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) TOOLS TO ASSIST IN THE WRITING PROCESS

AI tools like ChatGPT, Perplexity.ai, and Gemini (formerly Bard) can help you with the cover letter writing process.

Try this prompt to write a custom cover letter that speaks to your value as it relates to specific information about the company you are applying to.

**Prompt 1a:** Identify any problems, pain points, goals, new products, etc., for [company name] for 2024 and 2025.

**Prompt 1b:** Using this resume and job description, pick the top 3 or 4 challenges, pain points, and opportunities and identify how this candidate could help with them. Resume: "[copy and paste your resume here in quotes. Do not include your name, address, contact information, or any other personal information.]" Job description: "[copy and paste the full job description here in quotes.]"

**Prompt 1c:** Using all of this information, write a 250-word professional cover letter. Begin with an impactful statement that speaks to the candidate's key areas of expertise and accomplishments and how they can help the company achieve its goals, address pain points, etc. The initial paragraph should immediately mention the value the client brings that is specific to this company. Focus on impressive information to grab immediate attention by adding content on specific prior accomplishments and how those accomplishments relate to the job description and the company's goals, pain points, etc. End the cover letter with an impactful and direct call to action.

## REMINDERS TO CHECK, CHECK, AND RECHECK

Before you send or attach your cover letter, make sure you have done the following:

1. Do a spell check. For many employers, typos can put your application in the "no" pile.
2. Make sure you spell the name of the company and the hiring manager correctly.
3. Double-check to make sure you have included all of the information the job description requires, such as salary expectations or a list of references. Failure to do so could disqualify you from further consideration.

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## OUT-OF-THE-BOX JOB SEARCH TIPS

by *Vivian VanLier*

Submitting resumes and cover letters is often not enough to land you a job. As many as 80% of jobs are secured through networking or other forms of person-to-person contact, underscoring the importance of thinking outside the traditional job search box. Asking everyone you know if they hear of “anything” regarding an appropriate job is not effective. You need to be more specific and targeted.

A more effective strategy is to identify and make a list of the top 10-20 companies you would like to work for. This enables you to follow and set up alerts on their LinkedIn company pages, comment on their posts, and strategically seek contacts within the organization. Share your targeted list with those you know and ask if they have contacts within any of those companies. It does not matter what role their contact holds. A receptionist or administrative assistant may have access to a company directory, or they may know someone in a department that aligns with your field. Seize any potential contact information as the first step in networking your way into a company.

Here are some other “out-of-the-box” suggestions:

- **Use Social Media Innovatively (in addition to LinkedIn)** — Use Instagram to showcase a portfolio, or X, formerly known as Twitter, to engage with industry leaders. Participate in online forums and groups on Facebook. Create content that reflects your expertise and use hashtags strategically to increase visibility. Read this newsletter article for more tips: [How to be More Visible on Social Platforms with Minimal Time Investment](#).
- **Leverage Personal Branding** — Develop a strong personal brand that sets you apart. Then start a blog, podcast, or YouTube channel relevant to your industry. Our newsletter article [How to Communicate Your Personal Brand With Impact](#) provides strategies for communicating your personal brand effectively to stand out from the crowd.
- **Network the Unconventional Way** — Think outside the confines of professional events. Engage in community service, attend workshops, or join clubs that align with your interests. These avenues can lead to unexpected but valuable professional connections.



- **Set Up Informational Interviews** — Seek out informational interviews with professionals in your desired field. These meetings can provide invaluable insights and connections.
- **Utilize Alumni Networks** — Your alma mater's alumni network can be a goldmine for connections. Reach out to alumni in your field and ask for advice or insights into their career paths.
- **Do Freelance or Consulting Work** — Freelancing or consulting in your field can build your portfolio and broaden your network. Consulting engagements often lead to job offers.
- **Volunteer Strategically** — Volunteering in roles relevant to your career aspirations can offer practical experience and networking opportunities. It also showcases your commitment and passion for the field.
- **Attend Industry Conferences** — Attending conferences and engaging in professional development opportunities can be a great way to network and stay updated with industry trends. Connect with speakers and participants and share your insights on social media.

For more helpful tips and resources for your job search, visit our informative [Career Resources](#) and [YouTube videos](#).



## STAYING MOTIVATED ON MONDAYS: NAVIGATING THE JOB SEARCH JOURNEY

by Jeanne Stoner

Clients tell us that Monday mornings can be challenging during a job search, and they often ask for our help in planning for another round of applications, preparing for potential rejections, and, often, maintaining patience. This article shows you how to view Mondays as a new beginning, allowing you to energize and refine your job search strategy.

Here are some steps you can take to keep you motivated every Monday:

1. **Establish a Routine:** Start each week with a consistent routine. This could include a morning workout, a healthy breakfast, or a few minutes of meditation. A routine sets a positive tone for the week and helps transition your mindset from weekend mode to a more focused, professional outlook.

During my husband's career break, he felt the absence of his finance team. He began to volunteer at a church on Monday mornings, helping count the weekend's donations. This work, and the volunteer team's camaraderie, gave him a sense of purpose and joy.

2. **Set Realistic Weekly Goals:** What goals are essential to your success? According to [Mangosconnect.com](https://www.mangosconnect.com), you are 10 times more likely to get a job through a referral. Consider setting two weekly goals: the number of job applications to submit, and the number of networking conversations to schedule.

Not all goals have to be quantifiable. An article called [7 New Year Job Seeker Goals](#) suggests prioritizing job satisfaction. Understanding what makes you happy can help you to better focus your job search and achieve what you want. The book [Your Best Year Ever: A 5-Step Plan for Achieving Your Most Important Goals](#) by Michael Hyatt is an excellent guide for goal setting.

3. **Celebrate Small Wins:** Job searching is a marathon, not a sprint. Celebrate the small victories along the way: a successful networking meeting, a well-written cover letter, positive feedback from a potential employer, or an active lead with promise. Acknowledging these small wins can boost your morale and keep you motivated.
4. **Learn and Adapt:** Use Mondays to reflect on what's working and not working in your job search strategy. Be open to adapting your approach, such as tweaking your resume, trying different job search platforms, or experimenting with new networking tactics – such as messaging people on social platforms beyond LinkedIn: Facebook, X, Instagram, Pinterest, Reddit, and Slack. Find new conversations to join, participate in relevant online forums, or attend virtual or in-person networking events.
5. **Take Care of Yourself:** Job searching can be stressful. It's essential to take care of your mental and physical health. Exercise regularly, eat healthily, and ensure you're getting enough sleep. One of my clients earned a soccer coach certification and coached several teams during his career break. He said it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.
6. **Remember Your "Why":** Finally, remind yourself why you started this journey. Whether it's to pursue your passion, achieve financial stability, or grow professionally, keeping your goal in sight can be a powerful motivator.

Navigating Mondays during a job search can be manageable. The right mindset, strategies, and actions can become a springboard for success in your career journey. Stay focused and motivated, and embrace each week as a new opportunity to move closer to your career goals.



## ELEVATE YOUR PERSONAL BRAND, ELEVATE YOUR CAREER: THE POWER OF MINDSET

In the ever-evolving landscape of personal and professional growth, your mindset can be the game-changer that propels your personal brand and career to new heights. It's not just about the tasks you perform or the projects you handle; it's about the mindset you bring to every aspect of your life. Elevating your mindset not only shapes your personal brand, but also influences the trajectory of your career.

Let's dive into the ways you can elevate your mindset to elevate your personal brand and career.

### 1. Adopt a Growth Mindset for Personal Branding:

Embrace challenges as opportunities to learn and grow; view setbacks as stepping stones to success. When you approach your life with a mindset geared toward improvement, your personal brand naturally evolves, leaving a positive impression on those around you.

### 2. Inject Positivity into Your Personal and Professional Life:

Start your day with a bright outlook, focus on your achievements, and visualize your success. An optimistic mindset enhances your personal brand and attracts opportunities to your career journey.

### 3. Be Adaptable and Embrace Change for Career Growth:

In the dynamic landscape of personal and professional growth, adaptability is key. Embrace change, be open to new ideas, and cultivate a mindset of flexibility. An adaptable mindset ensures your personal brand stays relevant and evolves with the times, and that your career remains resilient in the face of challenges.

### 4. Build a Supportive Network for Personal and Professional Success:

Surround yourself with like-minded individuals who share your vision and values. A supportive network enhances your personal brand and provides valuable insights and guidance for your career. The collective mindset of your network can influence the perception of your personal brand, propelling your career forward.

### 5. Acknowledge and Celebrate Your Achievements for Personal and Professional Growth:

Recognize and celebrate your personal and career milestones, both big and small. Acknowledging achievements boosts your personal brand and creates a supportive professional environment. Your personal brand becomes a symbol of continuous accomplishment, reflecting positively on your career.

### 6. Learn and Grow from Setbacks for Personal and Career Development:

Inevitably, setbacks will happen in your personal and professional life. Instead of dwelling on them, view setbacks as opportunities to learn and improve. A resilient mindset in the face of challenges is a testament to your personal strength, shaping your brand and influencing your career trajectory.

### 7. Inspire Others in Your Personal and Professional Sphere:

Your mindset is contagious. Inspire those around you with your passion, dedication, and belief in the potential for success. When you share an elevated mindset with your personal and professional circle, it creates a ripple effect of motivation and excellence, boosting your personal brand and propelling your career forward.

The journey to elevating your personal brand and career starts from within. Cultivate a mindset that embraces growth, positivity, and authenticity, and watch as your brand and career soar to new heights. Your mindset is not just a personal asset; it's a powerful tool that can shape the trajectory of your personal brand and career, leaving an indelible mark on your life and professional journey.





## Special Feature

by *Laura Johnson*

## EMBRACING A FRESH START: THE ART OF POSITIVE GOAL RESETTING

Happy February! But wait. Should I be celebrating? I failed to stick to the goals I set at the beginning of the year. Then again...

...It's important to remember that as we go about our lives, we often encounter bumps in the road that sideline the goals we initially set with enthusiasm and determination. And we are not alone. Statistics indicate that only 9% of Americans who make resolutions complete them, and 80% of New Year's resolutions are forgotten by mid-winter, with 23% of people quitting in the first week of the year ([The Ohio State University](#) and [Drive Research](#)).

Instead of seeing bumps in goal achievement as a sign of failure, view them as an opportunity for a positive reset – a chance to realign your aspirations with your current reality. This process can be empowering, uplifting, and vital to achieving what you truly desire.

The reasons people struggle to stick to their goals include a range of both internal and external circumstances, including:

- Lack of Clarity
- Unrealistic Expectations
- Insufficient Motivation or Interest
- Lack of Planning and Strategy
- Procrastination and Poor Time Management
- Fear of Failure
- Lack of Support and Resources
- Changing Circumstances
- Failure to Track Progress
- Lack of Flexibility
- Emotional or Mental Health Issues



Understanding these challenges is the first step in developing strategies to overcome them. Setting realistic, well-defined goals, planning strategically, maintaining motivation, and being adaptable can significantly increase your chances of sticking to those goals.

When you realize that your initial goals are no longer in sync with your current situation, it's time for a reset. It isn't about beating yourself up for failing or about discarding your dreams. It's about adjusting to what fits best. It's about celebrating what you have achieved so far and then creating a way to continue your success in a way that best meets your needs.

## A PERSONAL EXAMPLE

In 2023, I decided to start an exercise routine. And it lasted only one month – inconsistently. Why? I was trying to fit my new 30-minute exercise routine in before breakfast, in addition to several other things I was already doing each morning. (I had read that most people who succeed with exercise do it in the morning). I used to love getting up early, but I soon began to procrastinate and grumble and feel guilty for skipping my treadmill routine.

However, instead of beating myself up, I took a time out. I looked at the best times of day to exercise FOR ME and researched the type of exercise that would best fit FOR ME. First, I gave myself credit for starting to exercise and for the work I had already accomplished. Then I settled on a 20-minute bodyweight HIIT (High-Intensity Interval Training) workout at noon four days a week. I started that exercise routine in March 2023 and I still do it today! (Well, there were a few breaks for the holidays, but I didn't call those failures either.)

*Continued on page 8*



## Special Feature

### EMBRACING A FRESH START: THE ART OF POSITIVE GOAL RESETTING (CONTINUED)

#### LESSONS LEARNED

Before jumping into setting new goals, take a moment to reflect. What have you learned from the goals that didn't materialize as planned? What aspects were within your control, and which weren't? Adopting a growth mindset is crucial during a goal reset. Understand that growth and learning are a part of the journey. Each step, whether perceived as a setback or advancement, is valuable. This mindset encourages resilience and persistence, which are vital for long-term success.

Remember, a goal reset is not a step back; it's a strategic pivot toward a path better suited to your current life. It's an act of self-care, a testament to your resilience, and a bold statement of your commitment to YOU. Every day offers a new opportunity to reset, refocus, and recharge your journey toward success.

#### STRATEGIES TO ADJUST YOUR GOALS WHEN OBSTACLES ARISE

**Focus on Strategies in Addition to Goals:** This can involve building specific habits and accountability check-ins, or identifying partners or mentors to inspire and support you.

**Set Smaller, Controllable Goals:** Break down your resolutions into smaller, achievable steps. This can help prevent you from becoming overwhelmed and increase the likelihood of success.

**Identify Obstacles and Plan Strategies:** When obstacles arise, revisit your goals and identify the specific challenges you're experiencing in meeting them. Then adjust your strategies as necessary.

**Adjust Goals as Needed:** Be open to reassessing and updating your approach. Celebrate the milestones along the way and be flexible in modifying your goals to better align with your circumstances and progress.

By incorporating these strategies, you can effectively address obstacles while pursuing your goals this year and beyond!



#### RESOURCES

Forbes: [Nine Strategies To Make Your New Year's Resolutions Really Stick This Year](#)

LIFE Intelligence: [3 Goal Setting Theories to Stick Your New Year's Resolutions](#)

The Productivity Flow: [The Best Trick to Hit Your New Year's Resolution \(Or Any Goal\) in 2024](#)

LinkedIn Pulse: [Instead of Making a New Year's Resolution, Make a Game Plan!](#)

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## ASK THE EXPERTS

*I find myself constantly struggling with imposter syndrome. How can I overcome these feelings of inadequacy? - Ratim A.*

Dealing with imposter syndrome – a common experience where individuals doubt their accomplishments, believe that they don't deserve what they have achieved, and fear being exposed as a "fraud" – can be challenging but manageable. Here are 10 action items to help you overcome these feelings of inadequacy:

1. **Recognize Imposter Syndrome:** Acknowledge that what you're experiencing is imposter syndrome. Many successful people experience these feelings, and recognizing that you're among them is the first step.
2. **Reframe Your Thoughts:** Challenge negative thoughts and reframe them into positive affirmations. Instead of thinking, "I don't deserve this," try, "I worked hard to be here."
3. **Keep a "Success Journal":** Maintain a journal where you record your achievements, positive feedback, and moments of success. Review it regularly to remind yourself of your accomplishments and their impact on others.
4. **Share Your Feelings:** Talk about your feelings with mentors, peers, or a therapist. You'll often find that others have had similar experiences and can offer support and advice.
5. **Set Realistic Goals:** Set achievable goals and celebrate small victories. This helps in building confidence and a sense of accomplishment.
6. **Focus on Learning:** Embrace a growth mindset. View challenges as opportunities to learn and grow rather than as threats to your competence. (Check out "[Step Away From the Checklist Mindset and Into the Growth Mindset](#)" from our July 2023 newsletter for more great information.)
7. **Seek Constructive Feedback:** Actively seek feedback to improve and learn, rather than to solely validate your work. This can help shift your focus from seeking approval to pursuing growth.
8. **Stop Comparing Yourself to Others:** Everyone's journey is unique. Focus on your path and progress, rather than comparing yourself to others.
9. **Practice Self-Compassion:** Be kind to yourself and acknowledge that no one is perfect. Accept that making mistakes is a part of the learning process.
10. **Consider Professional Help:** If imposter syndrome significantly impacts your quality of life, consider seeking help from a psychologist or counselor who can provide strategies to manage these feelings.



Remember, overcoming imposter syndrome is a process, and it's okay to seek help along the way. By implementing these action items, you can start to shift your mindset and acknowledge your abilities.

*Continued on page 10*



## ASK THE EXPERTS

*What daily habits can boost my self-confidence? - Marissa P.*

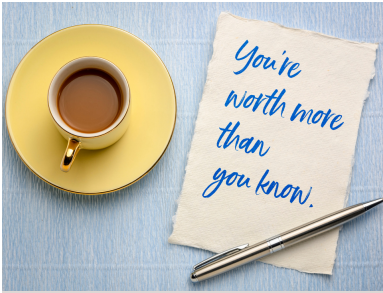
Self-confidence is built through a combination of mindset, actions, and habits. Here are 10 action items to help boost your self-confidence on a daily basis:

1. **Positive Affirmations:** Start each day with positive affirmations. Focus on your strengths and achievements. This helps to rewire your brain to think positively and build self-esteem.
2. **Set Realistic Goals:** Set small, achievable goals for yourself. Meeting these goals will give you a sense of accomplishment and reinforce your belief in your abilities.
3. **Exercise Regularly:** Physical activity releases endorphins, which improve mood and energy levels. A regular exercise routine can also improve your body image, contributing to greater self-confidence.
4. **Practice Good Posture:** Stand tall and sit up straight. This can instantly make you feel more powerful and confident. Check out our [Ask the Experts answer](#) that talks about “power posing.”
5. **Dress for Success:** Dress in a way that makes you feel confident and good about yourself. This doesn’t mean wearing expensive clothes, but wearing what makes you feel comfortable and self-assured.
6. **Learn New Skills:** Continuously learning and mastering new skills can boost your self-worth and confidence. This could range from a new hobby to professional development. Check out our “[Lifelong Learning Resources](#)” document for detailed information on gaining knowledge and skills for in-demand jobs.
7. **Practice Self-Care:** Prioritize taking care of your mental and physical health. This includes getting enough sleep, eating well, and managing stress.
8. **Surround Yourself with Positive People:** Spend time with people who uplift you and believe in you. Ask those you respect and value to identify some of your best traits and top strengths. Avoid negative influences that drain your energy and self-confidence.
9. **Face Your Fears:** Gradually expose yourself to the things you’re afraid of. This will help you to overcome fears and build confidence in your ability to handle challenges.
10. **Reflect on Your Accomplishments:** Regularly take time to reflect on what you have achieved. This helps you to focus on the positive and recognize your own competence and worth.

By incorporating these daily habits into your routine, you can steadily build and maintain a strong sense of self-confidence. Remember, self-confidence is a journey, not a destination, and small consistent steps can lead to significant improvements over time.







## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

by Deb Squire

### INTERNATIONAL BOOST SELF-ESTEEM MONTH

Self-esteem and self-image are words that are often used interchangeably, though they are different. Self-esteem is our subjective sense of overall worth and value. It is our feelings about ourselves and our ability to handle life's challenges. Self-image, which fluctuates, is our mental picture of ourselves. It is more concrete, cognitive, and descriptive.

The foundation of healthy self-esteem is an understanding of our core values – those fundamental beliefs and principles that guide our behavior and decision-making. Everyone has a unique set of core values, which are influenced by our unique upbringing, culture, and life experiences. Traumatic experiences can shake a person's self-esteem and may cause them to re-evaluate their core values.

In his book *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know*, Adam Grant states that values are the core principles in life. He believes that when you define yourself in terms of values rather than opinions, it's possible to change your deep-seated beliefs while keeping your values in place.

#### Try These Techniques:

- Ask yourself, "Who are my heroes, and why?" This simple exercise can help clarify your core values. The people we admire generally have traits that we value.
- Ask 10 people from different parts of your life, "What do you see me as particularly good at?" Others have a more objective view of us than we do of ourselves.
- There are many tests that can help you better evaluate your self-esteem. One from *Psychology Today* is this brief 20-question [Self-Esteem Test](#). You'll get results that include a summary of your answers, things to know, and ways to make changes.

#### 10 tips to boost your self-esteem:

1. Believe in yourself and your abilities.
2. Do something kind for someone else.
3. Recognize your strengths and accept your weaknesses. No one is perfect.
4. Set realistic stretch goals.
5. Understand your boundaries and exercise them appropriately.
6. Create a gratitude journal and write down 3 things you are grateful for each day.
7. Surround yourself with positive people.
8. Do not compare yourself with others. (Social media can negatively impact self-esteem.)
9. Focus on accomplishments and celebrate them – particularly the small ones.
10. Take care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, and recreationally.

As we change, learn, and grow, stepping back frequently and reflecting on what is the same, and what is different can help us stay grounded in our self-esteem. When are you going to take 30 minutes to reflect? You are worth it!

*Continued on page 12*





## HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

by Deb Squire

### INTERNATIONAL EXPECT SUCCESS MONTH

How do you define success for yourself? Is it an internal determination? Do you need outside validation? Or is it a combination? Is success different for you now than it was 5 years ago?

In his book *Atomic Habits: Tiny Changes, Remarkable Results*, James Clear proposes a unique strategy for achieving continued success. His premise is that your identity – who you are – is the key factor in sustained success. He says that behavior that is incongruent with the self will not work long-term. In other words, instead of changing our core value system, we should reframe our judgments about ourselves and others, our worldview, and our self-image.

Clear believes that there are 3 layers of behavior change:

1. Changing Your Outcomes - goals, what you get; temporary results.
2. Changing Your Process - the systems that lead to those results.
3. Changing Your identity - this is the deepest layer.

Here's a personal example: for many years I smoked cigarettes, as did most of my core group. However, I did not identify myself as a smoker. I hid my habit often (particularly from my mother). When I decided to quit, it was fairly easy. For several weeks, I chewed some nicotine gum. Since being a smoker was not part of my identity, it actually was a relief that I was no longer doing something that conflicted with my belief of who I am.

Here are two other examples.

*Household chore:*

- I need to do the dishes. (Outcome)
- Before I make a meal, I will think about how many dishes it will create, and then decide what to make accordingly. (Process)
- I am someone who cleans the kitchen before I go to bed. (Identity)

*Fitness goal:*

- I am going to run a marathon. (Outcome)
- Here's how I train to run a marathon. (Process)
- I am a marathon runner. Which marathon do I want to run next, and what do I need to do to make that happen? (Identity)

Clear says that motivation is overrated. Our identity matters most: who we believe we are. The more deeply a thought or action is tied to our identity, the more difficult it is to change it. The more pride we have in an aspect of our identity, the more motivated we will be to maintain the habits associated with it.

New identities require new evidence – and it is a simple 2-step process:

1. Decide the person you want to be.
2. Prove it to yourself with small wins.

What is something you want to change to feel more successful? Start with something small, like turning off the lights when you're not in the room. Embrace your identity as someone who turns off the lights. Maybe you want to add a reason or motivation: because it saves money, or because it impacts our environment.

Changes that seem small and unimportant at first will compound into remarkable results if you stick with them. You CAN make 2024 a successful year.



# VALENTINO CASANOVA CUPIDINI (CUPID)

## SPEAKER BIO

### CHERUB CHUMS: MISCHIEF & MATCHMAKING CO.



Valentino Casanova Cupidini, better known as Cupid, is renowned as the world's foremost authority on all matters of the heart and serves as the Chief Love Officer at Cherub Chums. With centuries of experience in matchmaking, relationship counseling, and heartstrings-tugging, Cupid has revolutionized the way that love is celebrated across cultures. His expertise lies in orchestrating serendipitous encounters and rekindling old flames, all while wielding his legendary bow and arrow with unmatched precision.

Cupid's role in shaping romances is legendary, evolving to address modern love and relationships. In his engaging talks, Cupid shares his insights on the nature of love, the importance of emotional connections, and the timeless art of romance. With a blend of humor, mythological anecdotes, and practical advice, he captivates his audience, leaving them enchanted and inspired. His unique perspective, coming from centuries of observing human interactions, offers a fresh and enlightening view of the most universal of all emotions.

#### Career Highlights:

- ♥ Founder of "Celestial Connections," a universal matchmaking service with a success rate that's simply heavenly.
- ♥ Keynote speaker at the annual "Olympian Symposium on Love and Relationships."
- ♥ Host of "Cupid's Conclave," an annual gala event that brings together deities, muses, and mortals to celebrate love in all its forms.
- ♥ Author of bestselling books including *Arrow to the Heart* and *Eternal Bonds: The Timeless Nature of Love*.
- ♥ Regular contributor to *Mythological Times* magazine, sharing insights on love dynamics in the modern world.
- ♥ Developer of "Heartstrings," a workshop series focused on building meaningful relationships.

#### Awards:

- ♥ The Golden Arrow Award: For unparalleled skill in creating romantic connections across time and space.
- ♥ The Venus Medal of Honor: Honoring a commitment to fostering love and harmony, bestowed by Venus herself.
- ♥ The Olympian Laurel of Peace: Awarded for efforts in using love to mend conflicts and bring peace among various realms.
- ♥ The Eros Lifetime Achievement Award: A prestigious accolade given for a lifelong dedication to understanding and nurturing love in all its forms.
- ♥ The Heartstrings Harmony Trophy: Celebrating innovative approaches in resolving complex emotional and romantic entanglements.
- ♥ The Unity Red Heart of Excellence: Celebrating a role in uniting diverse cultures and entities in the spirit of love and understanding.

#### Fun Facts:

- ♥ Cupid is a self-proclaimed chocoholic and believes that chocolate is the sixth language of love.
- ♥ He never misses a Valentine's Day party and is known for his signature dance move, "The Fluttering Heart."
- ♥ In his spare time, Cupid enjoys cloud sculpting and playing matchmaker for mythical creatures.

Cupid is available for keynote speeches, workshops, and private consultations. Whether it's navigating the complexities of modern love or adding a sprinkle of magic to your relationship, Cupid's insights are sure to hit the mark!



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