



# SHIELD FOR SUCCESS

Monthly tips for success and promotion of overall well-being brought to you by **Valparaiso University's Counseling Services**

## International Boost Self-Esteem Month

Welcome to the February issue of the Shield for Success! This monthly newsletter is divided into two parts. The first section provides information and resources on a topic relevant to the current month. The second section offers helpful tips and exercises tailored to each month's topic. February can be a difficult month for everyone. The days are often cold, gray, and short. For many people, seasonal affective disorder is still in full-swing. This can come with various depressive symptoms, one of those commonly being a sense of low self-esteem. Our self-esteem is never set and often changes throughout our daily lives and across time. Everyone is bound to experience both high points and low points. However, just feeling good about ourselves isn't the only reason for building up self-esteem. Improving our self-esteem can also improve our feelings of worth, makes it easier for us to manage difficult emotions and safeguards us from some mental health concerns. This month we're acknowledging International Boost Self-Esteem Month and providing tips and techniques to help.

### Links on Building Self-Esteem

- [International Boost Self-Esteem Month](#)
- [Break the Stress and Self-Esteem Cycle](#)
- [5 Tips for College Students](#)
- [15 Ways to Boost Your Confidence at College](#)
- [5 Ways to Build Lasting Self-Esteem](#)

#### In this issue:

- International Boost Self-Esteem Month
- Links on Building Self-Esteem
- Tips for Promoting and Improving Self-Esteem
- Instructions
- Mental Health Pain Scale



### Tips for Promoting and Improving Self-Esteem

- 1) *Take a moment to yourself once per day to reflect on what your personal strengths are.*
- 2) *Speak a positive affirmation to yourself in the mirror each morning.*
- 3) *Try a new activity or meet with someone you haven't interacted much with before.*
- 4) *Identify a skill or passion that you have and take additional chances to further develop it.*
- 5) *Create a specific goal to work toward for the week/month and track your progress.*
- 6) *Practice accepting compliments.*

### Mental Health Pain Scale Instructions

Step 1: If you choose to participate, first rate your mood on a 1-10 scale, you can use the Mental Health Pain scale provided.

Step 2: Each day you will have the opportunity to complete a different exercise. On weekdays, Monday through Friday, pick one exercise from the list provided for you below. On weekends, Saturday & Sunday, choose one exercise that you felt improved your mood the most, these exercises do not have to be from the exercises provided.

Step 3: After implementing the exercise, rate your mood using the same scale as Step 1.

### A Simple Mental Health Pain Scale

thegracefulpatient.wordpress.com

<b>MILD</b>		<b>1</b>	Everything is a-okay! There is absolutely nothing wrong. You're probably cuddling a fluffy kitten right now. Enjoy!
		<b>2</b>	You're a bit frustrated or disappointed, but you're easily distracted and cheered up with little effort.
		<b>3</b>	Things are bothering you, but you're coping. You might be overtired or hungry. The emotional equivalent of a headache.
<b>MODERATE</b>		<b>4</b>	Today is a bad day (or a few bad days). You still have the skills to get through it, but be gentle with yourself. Use self-care strategies.
		<b>5</b>	Your mental health is starting to impact on your everyday life. Easy things are becoming difficult. You should talk to your doctor.
		<b>6</b>	You can't do things the way you usually do them due to your mental health. Impulsive and compulsive thoughts may be hard to cope with.
<b>SEVERE</b>		<b>7</b>	You're avoiding things that make you more distressed, but that will make it worse. You should definitely seek help. This is serious.
		<b>8</b>	You can't hide your struggles anymore. You may have issues sleeping, eating, having fun, socialising, and work/study. Your mental health is affecting almost all parts of your life.
		<b>9</b>	You're at a critical point. You aren't functioning anymore. You need urgent help. You may be a risk to yourself or others if left untreated.
		<b>10</b>	The worst mental and emotional distress possible. You can no longer care for yourself. You can't imagine things getting any worse. Contact a crisis line immediately.

Created by Mike Moore, MA, LMHC, NCC

If there are any topics you are interested in seeing or learning more about please email [counseling.center@valpo.edu](mailto:counseling.center@valpo.edu), subject Shield for Success topic ideas.