



HERS

OPINION

HIS



Building Healthy Self Esteem

BY C.M. BROOKS

Building self-esteem is not an easy task considering the negativity there is in our lives, the world, not to mention all the consuming pressures there are in day to day living.

Looking to my own surroundings, the proof of this is evident because it is so conspicuous. Communities that were once placid, clean, and beautiful, are now nothing more than playgrounds for gun-toting gang members. Debilitated structures remain as a reminder of the days when businesses breathed life into the community, and debris along with children, are scattered in the streets. And never have I been a witness to so many people dealing drugs and selling their bodies, and for what I ask?

I would say that more than a few people suffer from a lack of self-esteem and would even venture to suggest that entire communities are sometimes razed as a by-product of such a deficiency.

A wise person once said that seeing is believing. So if some think that I am exaggerating too strongly, I would recommend if you are so inclined, to roam about the city on any occasion that is of convenience for you, to see what has taken place and what will continue for you, to see what has taken place and what will continue to flourish unless pride is instilled in ourselves and our communities. I might also add that although problems are prominent in North and Northeast Portland, they are not the only areas that are afflicted with maladies.

So how do we treat the sickness? How do we begin to build self-esteem for ourselves and our communities? First, it is almost a cliché to say, but I believe that everything begins in

the home. If you instill in your children that they are worthy of everything life has to offer regardless of where they live, or their ethnicity. If you believe that hard work and patience makes you a better person and moves you ahead of the game, then so will they. The key in doing this is to practice what you preach and to preach it often and loud enough so that it will be heard over MtV! Let your message be the "Golden Rule" in your home, not anyone else's.

Second, I rarely suffer from low self-esteem, but when I do, the only thing that will snap me out of it is just in the doing of anything positive. If my job has me down, I create things that are more mentally challenging for me. If I

floating around their homes. Think of the example set by it for the children. Think of the pride the results of such an effort would give us all!

Third, take pride in your accomplishments no matter how small they are or how insignificant they may appear to be when compared to others. You don't have to be on the verge of a medical break-through, or a Portland TrailBlazer scoring 20 point a game, or a famous rap-artist selling over 30 million albums. Don't compare yourself to someone or something that has no bearing or direct relation to you and your life. Understand your accomplishments and what they mean to you, and only you. Pat yourself on the back for doing a good job, then find another obstacle/goal and tackle it.

Fourth, an excellent esteem-builder was expressed to me by my cousin. "Looking to the future, instead of the past, provides me with the motivation to feel good about myself." If your life is filled with confusion and uncertainty because of past doings, take heart in the future. You can lay the foundation for "good" in your life by forging ahead because you cannot control the past, but you can get a grip on the future. There is no grief nor sorrow in the future, only possibilities. If you drag the past with you then these negative elements cloud whatever good fortunes are awaiting you and others.

Building self-esteem is not difficult, nor impossible. Lack of esteem is just an overwhelming feeling because there are so many contributing factors involved. Just when you think you have a handle on one problem, no sooner does another arise. This can cause anyone to stop believing in themselves and everything else. It can cause you to simply give up. But before you give up, get up and do something about it. Life is too short to lose a battle that can be won!

BY ULLYSSES TUCKER, JR.

As a sixteen year-old tenth grader in Washington, D.C., a young lady told me that I had low self-esteem and an inferiority complex. I laughed it off and went straight to the library. I actually had to look it up, after I figured out how to spell the words involved, because it was beyond my comprehension and vocabulary. I felt really stupid, confused, and bitter. Sylvia Watson, a student in my art class at Ballou High School, was correct in her observation. Why did I have low self-esteem and an inferiority complex?

Environment, family conditions, economic circumstances, and perception of oneself can all be key factors in a

person's development of healthy self-esteem or attitude towards life. Sylvia Watson lived in a pretty, red brick house around the corner from my roach-infested apartment building, and she always wore nice clothing. Both her parents lived at home, too. Au contraire, I was parentless, caught in a nasty custody battle with my mother's boyfriend and relatives over the seven children left behind, and poor. By not having some of the nice material possessions owned by some of the other kids at school, I was (as were my brothers and sisters) as easy target for jokes, public humiliation, and verbal abuse. Other students made fun of me all the time, but matters got worse when I grew four inches over the school year. All of my clothing, all of a sudden, was not large enough. Eventually, I dropped out of school and started hanging out in the streets more. To make matters worse, my sister, who was once two grades behind me, caught up and passed me academically. Certain family members always suggested that she would catch up with me or even pass me as she did. A self-fulfilling prophecy? Other members accused me of driving my mother (she died of cancer) to her grave with my criminal behavior and anti-

social attitude. They consistently reinforced to me that I would never amount to much, outside of a thug, and even went so far as to say that someone was going to kill me. My urban environment validated and promoted this hopelessness: crimes, poverty, violence, domestic violence, drugs, welfare, despair of the present and glorification of the wrong role models not worthy of praise. I had no vision, no dreams, no parents, and I was angry. Sylvia Watson, who eventually turned out to be a good friend, had me figured out. Ultimately, low self-esteem and all, I began to define myself by the crimes I committed and built a strong comradery with those owning the same mentality. They loved and accepted me for what I was: poor and di-

spair? Had it not been for my grandmother, there is no telling where I would be today because she always believed in me and encouraged me to do better. She consistently told me that God was not finished with me, despite my decadent behavior and lifestyle.

Once the court battles were over, I moved in with my uncle and eventually with my grandmother as an eleventh grader. Moving out of my ghetto neighborhood was one of the best things that could have happened to me because for the first time in my life, I lived in a house just as nice as the one Sylvia Watson lived in. At 18 years old, I experienced the thrill of having my own bedroom and sleeping in a bed all alone. It was great. I had new clothing, a new

attitude, a new community, and there was always food in the refrigerator. It took me a little while to adjust to the "square teenagers" in her neighborhood, but I made the adjustments. Instead of wanting

to steal cars, burn mailboxes, snatch pocketbooks, or rob people, kids in her area talked about college, being Boy Scouts, getting good grades, and about Jack & Jill. I either had to conform to my new environment or catch to bus' across town to be with my old friends and be home by curfew time. I conformed. I also learned to define my low self-esteem through sports, school activities, my own judgement and decisions, and more importantly, by the positive words coming from those I respected and loved: specifically, my grandmother and uncle. I turned 20 the summer after I graduated from high school, but I had a Masters' degree at age 25. The rest, as they say, is history. Time builds character and heals wounds.

Today, I have healthy self-esteem and a strong sense of who I am. All it took was a string of positive successes, a change of values, attitude, supportive people, and confidence that things would get better. I also learned that if you do good, good things will happen to you. People reap what they sow.

Unfortunately, many humans are still caught up in the cycle of events that happened to them as youngsters and consequently suffer from low self-esteem today. It is very important that people learn to feel good about themselves, their objectives, and future direction. It is also important to have hope, because without hope, it is difficult for an individual to see the entire picture or what the future might have in store for them. Parents can be most helpful in developing healthy esteem in their children by providing constructive criticism, being supportive of their goals/dream, and by giving them a hug when it's needed. Human touch can be so important and critical to early development. When I was down and out or parentless, the last thing I needed was for family members to tell me that I would never amount to much. Could they not see that my criminal activity was like a cry for help, love, or emotional support? Why trample me (emotionally) further into the mud of de-

rectionless, just like them.

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Broadway Hair Weevers and Designers

will be offering X-Mas Specials Starting Dec. 1, 1990 thru Jan. 1, 1991



- Curls \$50.00
- Relaxers \$35.00
- 10% off on partial weeves
- 15% off on full weeves
- Free condition or hair trim on press and curls
- Nails Full Set \$35.00
- Manicure \$8.00
- Reg. \$65-\$75
- Reg. \$45 & Up
- Reg: \$45.00
- Reg. \$12.00

So stop by 5852 N.E. 42nd Ave. and celebrate the Holidays with

- Hattie Porter
- Flenard Grisby
- Carolyn Stoudamire
- Ethel Bates-Bailey
- Karol Davidson



Tax Refunds to Be Claimed

Nearly \$250,000 in unclaimed federal income tax refunds are waiting for their proper owners to file claims for them according to Carolyn Leonard, Internal Revenue Service District Director for Oregon. Leonard explained that most of these refunds are going unclaimed for lack of a current address.

The Portland District IRS office has received 547 names of undelivered refund check recipients. The original refund checks were mailed to the home address listed on the tax form but were returned to the government as undeliverable by the Post Office.

Leonard said many checks remain undelivered because tax payers have moved or changed his or her last name and failed to notify the IRS. Other refund delays, according to Leonard, are caused by errors and omission on the tax return, or illegible names or addresses.

"By publishing these names," Leonard said, "we hope to encourage these people to contact IRS so we can arrange to have their refund checks reissued." The average unclaimed refund amounts to \$443.51. The total amount is \$242,599.97.

People listed should call the IRS toll-free tax information number (1-800-TAX-1040) for instructions on how to apply for their checks. Information needed includes name and address as shown on the tax return, present name and address, tax year for which the refund is believed due, social security number, amount of refund claimed, signature of taxpayer, and any other pertinent information to verify the claim.

Leonard indicated that the processing involved for reissuing checks normally takes up to six weeks.

Christmas Event For At-Risk Youth

The second annual Community Christmas 1990 Event, a celebration directed at bringing AT-Risk youth together with teens from Jefferson High and the Oregon Episcopal School, will be held at Redeemer Lutheran Church, NE 20th and Killingsworth, on Saturday, December 8, from 9:30 A.M. - 12:00 noon.



Commission Meeting

Date: December 12, 1990
Place: Portland Building
1120 SW Fifth Ave., 11th Fl.
Portland, OR
Time: 9:30 a.m.

Commission meetings are open to the public. A complete agenda is available at PDC. Call 796-5300.

PDC is the City of Portland's urban renewal and economic development agency.



Protect yourself against BIG LOSSES and COSTLY REPAIRS. Call Levi Russell 289-3648

My name is Levi Russell. I am an experienced housing rehabilitation specialist and home remodeling inspector. I advise homeowners in making improvements to their homes, correcting code violations, selection and quality of materials, selection of contractors, and estimating cost of improvements. I also perform house inspections for home buyers. For more information, call 289-3648.

MENTAL HEALTH

Opportunities With Community Psychiatric Clinic

CPC is a rapidly growing Mental Health Center. We provide services to psychiatrically disabled children & adults and their families through a variety of nationally recognized tx progs. located throughout Seattle. We are committed to a culturally and ethnically diverse workplace. Competitive salary & benefit pkg.

SUPERVISOR-EL REY (dntn Seattle): full service residential tx facility for the homeless mentally ill seeking supervisor for the CCR and TCF programs. Challenging oppor. to work in innovative, nationally recognized tx facility. Master, or BA in related field + supv. exp. Knowledge of res. prog. pref. for mentally ill adults. Day, eve & wkend hrs. BA, exp in acute care. Exp. working w/chem abuser pref.

CASE MANAGER-JDP (dntn Seattle): Case mgmt team servicing mentally ill misdemeanant adults. BA, prev exp w/mentally ill criminal must system.

MENTAL HEALTH NURSES
Full-time & part-time positions in expanding mental health agency serving north central King Co. WA (Seattle). Opportunities to work w/multi-disciplinary teams in community support, crisis intervention, residential programs, providing assessments, medication evals and case mgmt. positions avail for licensed RNs & Amps w/prescriptive authority and exp. working w/disabled mentally ill adults.

CASE MANAGER WALLINGFORD HOUSE
Provide assessment, tx planning, crisis intervention, skill training & case mgmt for mentally ill adults in psychosocial clubhouse prog. Salary \$21,500 - 27,500. BA + exp. w/mentally ill adults.

COORDINATOR-CIS: Screen acute mentally ill adults for respite care beds. Coordinate client activities with local emergency mental health providers, and provide support for clients. Swing and nite shift, skill in crisis intervention, assessment, and referral. Ability to work independently. Min. Req. BA plus 2 yrs. exp. Accessment and discharge planning a plus.

PSYCHIATRIST
Full-time & part-time positions available in expanding community mental health agency serving north central King Co., WA (Seattle). Opportunities to work w/multi-disciplinary teams providing community support, crisis intervention & psychosocial rehab. Min. req. WA State license, exp. working w/disabled mentally ill adults. Contact Personnel Office at (206) 461-3614, or send resume to CPC, 4319 Stone Way N., Seattle, WA 98103. EOE.

CHILD & FAMILY PROGRAM MANAGER
F/T position responsible for program which provides outpatient and day tx services for S.E.D. children & their families. Includes clinical, administrative, consultation & education activities. Previous exp. working with children, youth & families in a variety of settings is preferred. Salary: \$27,437 - 33,215. Min. Req.: Master's degree & supervisory exp., must qualify as child M.H. Specialist.

Please send cover letter (identify position) and resume to: ATTN: Personnel, CPC, 4319 Stone Way N. Seattle, WA 98103. Equal Opportunity Employer.