

TOASTMASTER ASSOCIATION FOR LEARNING, KNOWLEDGE, AND SKILLS (TALKS) LINK

TALKS TOASTMASTER CLUB #725166

MISSION STATEMENT: We provide supportive and positive learning experience in which members are encouraged to develop communication and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth

4 Habits to cultivate in order to promote your confidence by

Patricia Ogbonna

I read with interest from TalentEQ the outline of nine habits of confident people. However, I will highlight four of those nine habits in this segment. Remember, I am not referring to false sense of self that leads to arrogance, but the ability to trust in one's own judgment, skills, and knowledge, allowing one to approach challenges with a sense of self-assuredness. Confidence is rooted in a genuine sense of self-worth that is not dependent on external validation. Confident people embrace challenges as opportunities for growth and demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity. Marcus Tullius Cicero states that, "If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life." "With confidence, you have won even before you have started."

Habit #1 – Regroup and Adapt.

Confident people see failures or setbacks as opportunities for growth. They analyze and learn from their mistakes, reorganize, and develop strategies to combat similar mistakes in future. Winston Churchill said, "never give up on something that you can't go a day without thinking about." During my undergraduate studies, I was facing a withdrawal from one of my accounting courses because I did not receive a satisfactory grade on a writing requirement to continue the course. This

occurred five weeks into the course, I was distraught but never allowed my frustration to overwhelm me to the extent of dropping out of the course. I transferred to a different professor in another campus, and She accepted me but was concerned about me meeting up with the class. The first exam for the course was scheduled for the same week that I was accepted into the new class. Meanwhile, I still need to fulfil the writing requirement. I wrote my paper; I had a friend critique and provide constructive feedback. Needless to say, I received an A+ on the paper and A- in that class. The professor was amazed and impressed. I made the Dean's list that semester. I am sure you can relate to this. I encourage you not to give up on your endeavors no matter how challenging.

Habit #2 – Receive validation from within. Highly confident people do not allow opinion of others to guide their actions. They are connected to their inner self and trust their own abilities to succeed. They listen actively and value the input of others, recognizing that diverse perspectives can lead to better outcomes. Their self-assuredness allows them to accept feedback gracefully. However, they are not overly concerned about others perception of them or be defined by criticism by others. Sadly, a friend of mine did this in her marriage. She told me that it shattered her because her husband did not value her. He had too much of his own insecurities and hurts. My friend started out strong, but

SPECIAL DATES TO REMEMBER

TALKS Meeting Times:

Every 2nd Tuesday of the
month via ZOOM at

3:30pm – 4:30pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86328952096?pwd=MnErMHh1U1JRY3kyeWRLVGg2dGlnZD09>

Meeting ID: 863 2895 2096

Passcode: TBD

And

Every 4th Wednesday of the
month on one of DFAS
conference rooms at 11:30am –
12:30pm

her husband projected those negative energies on her that she succumbed to them because she sought her husband's validation and valued his opinion over her own. Her biggest mistake which she admitted. "If you place your validation in the hands of others, you will be obligated to go to them each time you need it."

Habit #3 – Embrace your uniqueness. Highly confident persons are comfortable with their uniqueness by not comparing themselves to others or pass judgment. You may agree with me that it can be emotionally draining when we compare ourselves to others leading us to self-depreciating thoughts about ourselves. Consequently, we resurrect the negative energy which hampers our ability to think positively and nurture

our creative energies to achieve success. Trust me, this one is a killer; stay away from comparing yourself to others; from unnecessary/undue competition with others. Each of us is unique. No two persons are the same. We have to capitalize on our strengths; stop doubting what you already know deep inside you are enough. Not as the world expects you to be, but as you are in your brilliance. Let's be comfortable in ourselves; embrace our uniqueness with gratitude and appreciation. "Once I began to realize that there were no rules and that my path didn't have to look like everyone else's, I relaxed and my whole world opened up."- G. Brian Benson.

Habit #4 - Don't shy away from conflict; they understand that avoiding conflict hinders personal and

professional development. They manage conflict effectively, engaging in uncomfortable conversations and making difficult decisions. I used to think that conflict is a bad thing but after one of my experiences with a colleague I was training on her tasks as a new member of our team, I had a different opinion. For the first month into the training, there was no improvement for the new employee learning her tasks. Why the employee was not showing any interest in completing her job responsibilities was incomprehensible. It was not until I initiated a private dialogue with open mind to try to resolve any issues that I discovered what was hampering her progress on the training. I learned a lot on how I was contributing to the conflict and become

aware of some important attributes I needed to cultivate. I began to work on my empathy toward others. This experience strengthened our relationship.

I conclude that challenges abound but our ability to handle them becomes more crucial in determining our success. Those who exude self-confidence cultivate the never give up attitude, learn from mistakes, and apply lessons-learned for future success; they embrace and appreciate their uniqueness and rely on their inner self enabling them to radiate positivity and tap their creative energies. Confident persons embrace conflicts which are opportunities for growth. Remember "Your success will be determined by your own confidence and fortitude." —Michelle Obama.



TOASTMASTER SPOTLIGHT

By Adele Borders, TALKS Treasurer

What made you join Toastmasters?

I joined TALKS in August 2016 after listening to my Director's advise during my annual evaluation. The supervisors give "improvement" advise to employees as part of the feedback process in order to get a better appraisal the following year. He claims I never volunteer to brief our leadership team, but when gets assigned, I can deliver. I told him I get nervous when speaking in front of people, that I only do it when required to do so. He said there is a club here at DFAS that helps employees with a problem like mine – public speaking. The annual appraisal was conducted in May. Every month thereafter, my boss checks up on me and asks me if I had

joined yet. I procrastinated and didn't join until August, only because I get tired of hearing about it. I did it only to "shut him up" and tell him I tried. Little did I know, the day I attended my first meeting was a life changing event for me that will forever be etched in my brain. I was immediately impressed by the way I was greeted; I was treated like a dignitary. Seriously, they made me feel so special. The hour-long meeting was not only productive (my pet peeve is anything wasteful), but also entertaining. I was never pressured to join. Right away, I knew I wanted to be part of this wonderful group of individuals. Since then, I never looked back, and it has proven to be the best

investment in myself that yields surpassing returns. It's a gift that keeps giving.

How have you benefited from being in Toastmaster?

There are so many benefits to list. However, the greatest benefit for me is the lasting friendship that every fellow Toastmaster has bestowed upon me. People from different walks of life, young and old, when I see them at the meeting, whether it's an initial get to know, instantly we become friends. When you see them again at another meeting, it's like a reunion of friends. The projects I have completed have all impacted and improved my life. I never imagined myself EVER to be speaking

in front of more than a hundred people being a presenter at a District Conference, but I did. I never imagined myself competing in a speech contest, much less winning several of them up to the Division level. I never imagined myself critiquing someone, giving them the good, the bad, and the ugly of constructive feedback and getting thanked for doing so. It still bogs my mind when I received my first DTM (Distinguished Toast Master) plaque. The year before Covid, I was named District 11 “Toastmaster of the Year”, didn’t think it was possible, but it did. This was the year I was a member of 5

clubs, I was teaching Pathways, I started a new club, I was a District Officer. Toastmaster made me a better leader.

What are the challenges and how did you overcome them?

One thing that will never go away are the butterflies in my stomach when I speak. The only difference from when I first started is, now I have command of those butterflies. I know how to redirect them, to the point that they don’t bother me anymore when I speak in public. Don’t get me wrong, they are always there, giving me nervous feelings, but they don’t control me anymore. I am the one controlling them. Making them go

to the corner the way I wanted them to go. Overcoming nervousness takes a lot of practice. Therefore, in every meeting that I attend, I make sure I say something, either by participating in a role or if no role is assigned to me, I make sure I participate in the Table Topics portion. Another challenge is time. Competing priorities preclude me from attending. I remind myself that I need a “me time”. A time to wind down from the busy schedule and devote an hour of my time investing in things that make me a better person. I wish my former director can see me now. I know he will say good job, time well spent.

JOIN TOASTMASTERS: Toastmasters is a friendly environment where people are genuinely interested in each other. Toastmasters works because it is welcoming, positive, and supportive with each and every member playing a role in every member’s growth and success. Contact Trevor Black the VP of Membership at: 317- 508-1129 or by email at: trevor.a.black4.civ@mail.mil