



THE FOUNDATIONS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE (AND HOW SELF-LOVE GROWS FROM IT)



**THIS IS SIMPLY MY PERSPECTIVE ON HOW
TO GROW YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE
LANGUAGE AND EXPERIENCES MAY VARY,
AND INDIVIDUALS ALWAYS DEFINE
THEMSELVES AND THEIR EXPERIENCES.**

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WELCOME

**SELF-CONFIDENCE ISN'T SOMETHING YOU'RE BORN WITH OR WITHOUT.
IT'S SOMETHING YOU BUILD, PROTECT, AND RETURN TO.**

**THIS RESOURCE ISN'T A FORMULA OR A FIX.
IT'S A SMALL COLLECTION OF MY THOUGHTS, EXPERIENCES, AND TOOLS THAT
HAVE HELPED ME STRENGTHEN MY OWN CONFIDENCE AND, IN TURN, DEEPEN
MY SELF-LOVE.**

TAKE WHAT RESONATES. LEAVE WHAT DOESN'T. MOVE AT YOUR OWN PACE.

**YOU DON'T NEED TO BECOME SOMEONE ELSE TO BE WORTHY.
YOU'RE ALLOWED TO BUILD A LIFE THAT FEELS STEADY INSIDE YOUR OWN
SKIN.**

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE. 



GENTLE DISCLAIMER

**THIS RESOURCE IS ROOTED IN MY OWN LIVED EXPERIENCE,
REFLECTIONS, AND PERSONAL GROWTH. IT'S NOT MEANT
TO REPLACE PROFESSIONAL MENTAL HEALTH CARE,
THERAPY, OR MEDICAL ADVICE.
IF YOU'RE STRUGGLING, FEELING OVERWHELMED, OR IN
NEED OF SUPPORT BEYOND WHAT THESE PAGES CAN
OFFER, PLEASE REACH OUT TO A QUALIFIED MENTAL
HEALTH PROFESSIONAL OR A TRUSTED SUPPORT SERVICE.
YOU DESERVE CARE, SAFETY, AND SUPPORT, ALWAYS.**

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I TALK ABOUT SELF-CONFIDENCE... A LOT, BUT HERE'S THE THING PEOPLE SOMETIMES ASSUME ABOUT ME THAT ISN'T ACTUALLY TRUE:

I DIDN'T START FROM SOME HORRIBLE SELF-HATRED OR DISLIKE BECAUSE I AM LGBTQ+.

TO BE HONEST, I'VE ALWAYS HAD A BASELINE LEVEL OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN MYSELF. A LITTLE DELUSIONAL AT TIMES, I AM SURE, IF I AM BEING HONEST... LOL. BUT, I WAS LUCKY; I GREW UP WITH PARENTS WHO TOLD ME I COULD BE WHOMEVER I WANTED TO BE, AS LONG AS I DIDN'T CAUSE HARM AND COULD TAKE CARE OF MYSELF. THERE WASN'T A RIGID MOULD I HAD TO FIT INTO. THERE WASN'T A CONSTANT MESSAGE THAT I WAS "TOO MUCH" OR "WRONG." THERE WAS NO NAGGING EXPECTATION TO GET MARRIED, HAVE CHILDREN, AND BE A "GOOD GIRL."

THAT FOUNDATION MATTERS.

BECAUSE OF THAT, MY JOURNEY HASN'T REALLY BEEN ABOUT LEARNING TO LOVE MYSELF FROM SCRATCH, LIKE IT MAY BE FOR MANY OTHERS; IT'S BEEN ABOUT BUILDING, PROTECTING, AND REFINING MY SELF-CONFIDENCE, ESPECIALLY IN A WORLD THAT DOESN'T EXACTLY REWARD QUEER AND LGBTQ+ PEOPLE FOR BELIEVING IN THEMSELVES.

SELF-CONFIDENCE IS WHAT MADE SELF-LOVE POSSIBLE FOR ME. AND LIKE SELF-LOVE, IT WASN'T ONE THING; IT WAS BUILT OVER TIME.



SO, LET'S TALK ABOUT THE FOUNDATIONS OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND HOW THEY QUIETLY GROW INTO SELF-LOVE... WHETHER YOU ARE WORKING ON YOURS FROM SCRATCH, OR ALREADY PASSED MID-WAY 😊

1. YOUR INNER VOICE SETS THE TONE

CONFIDENCE STARTS WITH HOW YOU TALK TO YOURSELF.

THAT INNER VOICE (THE ONE THAT REACTS WHEN YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, SAY SOMETHING AWKWARD, OR DON'T GET THE OUTCOME YOU HOPED FOR) EITHER BUILDS YOU UP OR SLOWLY ERODES YOU.

EVEN WITH A NATURAL SENSE OF CONFIDENCE, THAT VOICE CAN GET DISTORTED BY SHAME, FEAR, OR OTHER PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS. ESPECIALLY AS A QUEER PERSON NAVIGATING SYSTEMS THAT QUESTION YOUR LEGITIMACY.

ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL THINGS YOU CAN DO IS MAKE YOUR INNER VOICE LIVABLE.

NOT HYPE. NOT TOXIC POSITIVITY. JUST A VOICE THAT DOESN'T TEAR YOU DOWN FOR EXISTING. A VOICE THAT SAYS, "OKAY, THAT DIDN'T WORK. YOU'RE STILL ALLOWED TO BE HERE."

THAT KIND OF SELF-TALK IS CONFIDENCE MAINTENANCE. AND OVER TIME, IT BECOMES SELF-LOVE.



2. KNOWING WHO YOU ARE (AND WHO YOU'RE NOT)

CONFIDENCE ISN'T LOUD; IT'S GROUNDED.

IN MY CHILDHOOD AND EARLY ADULTHOOD, THERE WERE PARTS OF ME THAT WERE STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION. I WAS MORE AGREEABLE THAN I REALIZED, MORE LIKELY TO ADAPT THAN TO ASK WHAT I ACTUALLY WANTED. NOT BECAUSE I LACKED CONFIDENCE, BUT BECAUSE I WANTED CONNECTION.

SELF-CONFIDENCE DEEPENS WHEN YOU KNOW YOUR YES AND YOUR NO.

IT'S LEARNING WHAT YOU LIKE, WHAT YOU DON'T, AND WHAT YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO PRETEND ABOUT ANYMORE. IT'S CHOOSING YOUR INTERESTS, YOUR VALUES, YOUR PACE, AND NOT EDITING THEM TO BE MORE PALATABLE.

WHEN YOU STOP PERFORMING, CONFIDENCE SETTLES INTO SOMETHING QUIETER AND STURDIER. AND THAT STEADINESS IS A FORM OF SELF-LOVE.



3. MENTAL HEALTH SHAPES CONFIDENCE ESPECIALLY IN A LOUD WORLD

CONFIDENCE DOESN'T EXIST IN A VACUUM.

EVEN WHEN YOU HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF SELF, THE WORLD CAN GET LOUD. BETWEEN MISINFORMATION, MORAL PANIC, ONLINE HATE, AND INCREASINGLY HOSTILE POLITICS (ESPECIALLY TOWARD LGBTQ+ PEOPLE) IT'S EASY FOR THAT NOISE TO SEEP IN.

WHEN YOUR BRAIN IS ALREADY PRONE TO QUESTIONING THINGS, ALL OF THAT EXTERNAL CHAOS TURNS UP THE VOLUME. SUDDENLY, YOU'RE NOT JUST MANAGING YOUR OWN THOUGHTS, YOU'RE FIELDING BAD-FAITH ARGUMENTS, FEAR-BASED NARRATIVES, AND PEOPLE WHO BENEFIT FROM YOU DOUBTING YOURSELF.

FOR ME, LEARNING TO MANAGE MY MENTAL HEALTH WASN'T ABOUT "FIXING" MYSELF. IT WAS ABOUT FILTERING WHAT WAS PASSING THROUGH MY BRAIN.

ABOUT DECIDING WHAT ACTUALLY DESERVED MY ATTENTION AND WHAT DIDN'T. ABOUT TURNING THE VOLUME DOWN ENOUGH TO HEAR MY OWN VOICE AGAIN.

BECAUSE WHEN YOUR MIND IS CONSTANTLY ON DEFENSE, CONFIDENCE GETS HARDER TO ACCESS. NOT BECAUSE IT'S GONE, BUT BECAUSE IT'S BURIED UNDER NOISE.

CARING FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IS PART OF PROTECTING YOUR CONFIDENCE. AND WHEN CONFIDENCE IS PROTECTED, SELF-LOVE HAS ROOM TO BREATHE.



4. SELF-ACCEPTANCE KEEPS CONFIDENCE FROM BEING CONDITIONAL

THIS IS WHERE CONFIDENCE AND SELF-LOVE REALLY MEET.

CONFIDENCE DOESN'T MEAN YOU THINK YOU'RE PERFECT. IT MEANS YOU DON'T WITHHOLD YOUR WORTH UNTIL YOU REACH SOME IMAGINARY MILESTONE.

I NEVER FULLY BOUGHT INTO THE IDEA THAT I HAD TO EARN MY RIGHT TO EXIST, BUT I DID HAVE MOMENTS WHERE I THOUGHT LIFE SHOULD LOOK A CERTAIN WAY. BE MORE PRODUCTIVE. MORE IMPRESSIVE. MORE PUT TOGETHER. MORE PERFECT...

REAL CONFIDENCE SAYS:

"I DON'T HAVE TO BECOME SOMEONE ELSE TO BE VALID."

"I DON'T NEED TO MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS"

"NO HARM, NO FOUL"

SELF-ACCEPTANCE IS WHAT KEEPS CONFIDENCE FROM COLLAPSING WHEN LIFE DOESN'T GO AS PLANNED. IT'S WHAT TURNS CONFIDENCE INTO SOMETHING SUSTAINABLE, AND THAT SUSTAINABILITY IS SELF-LOVE.



5. BOUNDARIES PROTECT YOUR CONFIDENCE

CONFIDENCE IS FRAGILE IN THE WRONG ENVIRONMENT.

IF YOU'RE CONSTANTLY AROUND PEOPLE WHO UNDERMINE YOU, QUESTION YOUR REALITY, OR SUBTLY CHIP AWAY AT YOUR SENSE OF SELF (EVEN WITH GOOD INTENTIONS), CONFIDENCE ERODES.

BOUNDARIES ARE NOT WALLS. THEY'RE REINFORCEMENT.

I HAD TO LEARN THAT GIVING ENDLESSLY WASN'T CONFIDENCE, IT WAS PEOPLE-PLEASING DRESSED UP AS GENEROSITY. PROTECTING MY TIME, ENERGY, AND EMOTIONAL RESOURCES MADE MY CONFIDENCE STRONGER, NOT SMALLER.

AND STRONG CONFIDENCE CREATES SPACE FOR SELF-LOVE TO ACTUALLY LIVE.



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6. SELF-CARE IS CONFIDENCE IN ACTION

SELF-CARE ISN'T ABOUT FIXING YOURSELF.
IT'S ABOUT TREATING YOURSELF LIKE SOMEONE YOU ADMIRE AND TRUST.

IT'S REST. IT'S SAYING NO. IT'S DOING THE THING YOU'VE BEEN AVOIDING
BECAUSE FUTURE-YOU DESERVES SUPPORT. IT'S SOFTNESS AND FOLLOW-
THROUGH.

WHEN YOU CONSISTENTLY SHOW UP FOR YOURSELF, YOU REINFORCE THE
BELIEF THAT YOU'RE CAPABLE, WORTHY, AND DESERVING OF CARE. (AND,
BONUS: THAT SETS THE EXPECTATION TO RECEIVE THE SAME BELIEF FROM
OTHERS.)

THAT BELIEF IS YOUR CONFIDENCE.
AND WHEN IT STICKS, IT BECOMES SELF-LOVE.

I DON'T BELIEVE EVERYONE STARTS FROM THE SAME PLACE AND I DON'T
BELIEVE CONFIDENCE OR SELF-LOVE LOOK THE SAME FOR EVERYONE,
ESPECIALLY IN QUEER LGBTQ+ LIVES SHAPED BY DIFFERENT LEVELS OF
SAFETY AND SUPPORT. BUT I DO BELIEVE CONFIDENCE CAN BE BUILT, IN
EVERYONE AND ANYONE...NO HARM, NO FOUL.

AND WHEN THIS SELF-CONFIDENCE IS BUILT, SELF-LOVE AND SELF-WORTH
(AND ALL THE GOOD THINGS IN LIFE), DON'T FEEL FORCED ANYMORE;
THEY FEEL INEVITABLE.

