

TRAINERMAKER

8 Tips to Improve Your Client's Self Esteem

As fitness professionals we spend our time learning about how to change people physically, and then we apply that knowledge in the gym. We see our client's shapes change in front of us – and yet often, we do not see the change in confidence and self esteem that you would expect from such amazing physical progress. It would appear that it is much, much harder to change the way our clients feel about themselves, than their appearance!

Have a read through the following statements – do any of these apply to your clients?

Do your clients...

- Feel like they hate or dislike themselves
- Feel worthless or not good enough
- Feel unable to make decisions or assert themselves
- Feel like no one likes them
- Take blame for things that aren't their fault
- Feel guilt for spending time or money on themselves
- Feel unable to recognise their own strengths
- Feel undeserving of happiness
- Have low confidence

If any of these statements ring true about clients under your care, then you could and should take some simple steps to help them make behaviour changes. Below are some interventions that you could put in place, without turning your fitness sessions into counselling sessions.

1. Think about what may be affecting your clients self-esteem. Talk to them about what may be affecting them so that you can learn things that it's ok to say, and things that it is not ok to say.
2. Become aware of the power of your own influence on people so that you can use it to positive affect.
3. Reduce your clients' negative 'self talk'. Set some behaviour rules for your sessions that do not allow negative reflections.
4. Encourage your client to spend time with like-minded, people. Arrange group activities that help build a 'team' so that our client feels loved and an important part of the group.
5. Help your client learn to be assertive – empower them. Ask them to make some decisions on what their fitness session should look like; the reps, sets and weight they should be lifting etc.
6. Set your clients challenges. These should be varied and fun. Nothing that could turn into a motivational disaster – but a challenge that would mean something to your client and be an intrinsic motivator.

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7. Focus on positives – Often we forget to celebrate our client’s success stories as much as we should. We see people making physical progress every day and perhaps forget that even little things – like your client setting up a barbell for the first time by themselves, can be an achievement worth celebrating!
8. Become part of a support network for your client. Be someone they can trust and feel cares.

By applying some of these simple tactics you WILL make a difference to your client’s self esteem. Perhaps even, a bigger difference than the change brought about by their physical change...

For more information on mental health, go to www.mind.org.uk