

Curriculum Resource

Building Your Self Confidence

This resource explores ways to change your mindset or behaviors to build your self-confidence. Increased self-confidence can help you move forward in positive ways at home, school, work, in your community or social settings. Improved self-confidence can have positive effects on your mental, physical, and emotional well-being.

Building Your Self Confidence has been developed to support adult learners with Level 1 skills as they work towards their individual goals of work, further education and training, apprenticeship, or independence. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success model.

OALCF Alignment

Competency	Task Group	Level
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B1. Interact with others	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B2. Write continuous text	1
Competency B - Communicate Ideas and Information	B3. Complete and create documents	2
Competency E - Manage Learning	N/A	1
Choose an item.	Choose an item.	Choose an item.

Goal Paths (check all that apply)

- Employment
- Apprenticeship
- Secondary School Credit
- Postsecondary
- Independence

Embedded Skills for Success (check all that apply)

- Adaptability
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creativity and innovation
- Digital
- Numeracy
- Problem Solving
- Reading
- Writing

Notes: B3.2a

COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO

Building Your Self-Confidence

Introduction

Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) is pleased to share our “Building Your Self Confidence” resource. To help meet the needs of under-represented groups, CLO has been funded by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development to develop seven curriculum resources that meet the needs of under-represented learners, introduce the Government of Canada’s **Skills for Success** model, and align with the **Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework**.

Adult learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) programs typically face multiple challenges besides low levels of literacy. From CLO’s perspective, under-represented learners are the adult learners in LBS programs who face additional barriers that make thriving in Ontario more difficult. Factors include but are not limited to:

- Poverty
- Disabilities
- Mental health issues
- Age-related challenges
- Learners who are Indigenous persons, visible minorities, or immigrants
- Gender inequality
- Sexual orientation discrimination
- And other socio-economic inequities

This resource explores ways to change your mindset or behaviours to build your self confidence. Increased self confidence can help you move forward in positive ways at home, school, work, in your community or social settings. Improved self confidence can have positive effects on your mental, physical and emotional well being.

“Building Your Self Confidence” has been developed to support adult learners with Level 1 skills as they work towards their individual goals of work, further education and training, apprenticeship, or independence. It has links to both the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework and the Skills for Success model.

In May 2021, the Government of Canada introduced an update to its Essential Skills model. The updated model has been renamed “**Skills for Success**”(SFS). Information about the Skills for Success model is available on the [SFS website](#).

While developing our resources, CLO looked at the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation’s (SRDC) research on the Skills for Success model. Literacy practitioners will be interested in the SRDC’s [Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report](#) as it supports implementation of the individual skills in the model. The SRDC’s research report to support the launch of [Skills for Success: Structure evidence and recommendations – Final Report](#) is also recommended reading.

For Practitioners – More on the Skills for Success

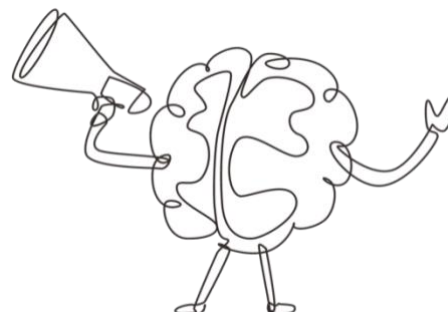
While there are **nine Skills for Success**, in this resource CLO focusses, in part, on entry level skill components of **Adaptability**. The information in this section is from the [Skills for Success website](#).

Adaptability

Adaptability is the ability to achieve or adjust goals and behaviours when expected or unexpected change occurs, by planning, staying focused, persisting, and overcoming setbacks.

According to the Skills for Success website, major changes in society affect how you work, live and learn, requiring you to constantly adapt to change. Being able to adapt helps you to deal effectively with change, learn new skills and behaviours when needed, stay focused on your responsibilities and goals, and not give up when situations are difficult. These skills help you to stay positive and manage the stress that can come from change in the workplace, community and your life at home.

While the Skills for Success focus on adapting to external challenges, there is also applicability for the skill of adaptability when looking at internal changes. Being able to adapt or change one’s mindset or circumstance can also enable you to deal more positively in all areas of your life.



Adaptability: Entry Level Proficiency: You can follow direction to adjust and complete plans, tasks and goals. You can do this in response to expected and unexpected changes requiring minor adjustment or learning that is provided. You can stay positive, persist, and manage emotions in response to minor stress.

Practitioners can read about the definitions, components and proficiency levels for the **nine Skills for Success** on the Government of Canada’s website. For more information about the proficiencies, you can also read the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation’s (SRDC) [*Skills for Success Implementation Guidance Final Report*](#).



Building Your Self Confidence is designed for Level 1 learners in Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills program.

Literacy practitioners can verbally share the content with learners with Level 1 skills. Learners with higher skill levels could use this resource independently.

Building Your Self-Confidence

Building Your Self-Confidence contains four sections:

1. What Is Self-Confidence?
2. Why Do People Lack Self-Confidence?
3. Ways to Build Your Self-Confidence
4. Supporting Activity

Section 1 – What is Self-Confidence?

What is self-confidence? Self-confidence is about **believing in yourself**.



Note To Practitioners

Here are three definitions you can share.

- The dictionary says that self-confidence is confidence or belief in yourself and in your powers and abilities (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).
- Wikipedia says that self-confidence is having trust in yourself.
- ABC Life Literacy Canada says that self-confidence is believing in yourself and your ability to take on a challenge and succeed.

Self-confidence is also about:

- Valuing yourself
- Knowing you deserve respect
- Accepting that you are a good person even when you make mistakes
- Believing you are important to others even when you have a different:
 - type of job
 - home life
 - education
 - skills level
- Understanding that you have both strengths and weaknesses
- Knowing that weaknesses do not make you less important

Self-confidence is not:

- Thinking you are perfect
- Acting like you are better than others
- Being bold and pushy
- Being the loudest person in the room

Self-confidence is important for many reasons. Self-confidence can help people to:

- Have less fear of failure
- Be more able to react to change
- Be more willing to try new things and take risks
- Believe in themselves
- Feel they can solve their problems
- Know what their strengths and weaknesses are

Many people lack self-confidence. We will talk about that more in the next section.



Something to Think About...

Do you believe in yourself a lot, a little or not at all?
Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.



Always remember you are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think.”

A.A. Milne

Section 2 – Why Do People Lack Self-Confidence?



Note To Practitioners

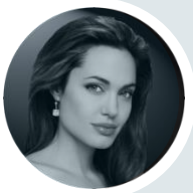
This may be a challenging topic area for some people, and it may trigger difficult memories and conversations. Project Read Literacy Network has created an online guide called "[Yes I Can: A Mental Health Guide for Adult Literacy Facilitators](#)". This guide might help with any challenging conversations.

Sometimes, people can feel like almost everyone else has self-confidence except for them. This isn't true.

Many people lack self-confidence or self-esteem.

Many people feel that they aren't good enough.

For example, would you think that the beautiful and popular actor Angelina Jolie lacks self-esteem? She does! Here is what Angelina Jolie has to say:



"I struggle with low self-esteem all the time! I think everyone does. I have so much wrong with me, it's unbelievable!"

There are many reasons that people might lack self-confidence. Here are just a few:

- People tell you that you don't matter
- People say that you won't amount to anything
- People bullied you or abused you in the past, or they are doing it now
- You are ashamed that you didn't do well at school
- You feel less important because you have less income or education
- People often criticize you at home, work or school

- People harass you due to:
 - race
 - disability
 - religion
 - gender
 - sexual orientation
 - body type
 - beliefs
 - or any other issues

- You feel unable to do what people expect you to do

- You have a lot of stress or a difficult life situation

- People shame you on social media

**The truth is – you are good enough!
You do matter, just as you are.**

This resource shares some ways to build your self-confidence. However, if you have very low self-confidence, you may need help. Counselling is one thing that may help you. Here are some ways you can find counselling support

- Talk to someone you trust, someone who makes you feel good about yourself.

- Talk to your doctor.

- Reach out to Ontario 211 to learn about counselling services. Call them or visit their website: <https://211ontario.ca/search/>

Section 3 – Ways to Build Your Self-Confidence

Here are nine ways that you can build your self-confidence.

1. Figure out what hurts your self-confidence

- Think about things that lower your self-confidence.
 - Can you avoid these things?
 - Can you deal with things differently to improve self-confidence?
- Try not to get involved in situations that bring down your self-confidence.
- Spend less time with people who are negative towards you.

2. Figure out what builds your self-confidence

- Think about the things in your life that help you feel more confident.
- Do activities that increase your confidence and make you feel better about yourself.
- Do things you are good at and enjoy. This is a great way to boost your self-confidence!

3. Think about what you are good at

You are probably good at many things. You just may not give yourself enough credit. You should be proud when you are good at something. Being proud of yourself is part of self-confidence. You may be good at doing things or you may act in good ways.

Examples are:

- fixing cars
- caring for children
- sewing
- being kind to others
- having patience
- being reliable

Think about other things you are proud of:

- your achievements
- your good values and beliefs
- being a good friend

4. Make a list of your strengths

- Think about your strengths. Make a list of what you are good at.
- Maybe you aren't sure what you are good at. Ask people you care about what they think your strengths are.
- Add those strengths to your list.
- Look at your list often to think about your strengths and achievements.
- A great time to do this is when you are feeling low. Remembering all your positive traits can boost your self-confidence.

5. Be around people who encourage and support you

- Positive people can build self-confidence! Negative, judgemental people bring down your self-confidence
- Choose to be around positive people.
- Try to avoid negative people. Other people may harass, bully or constantly criticize you. They may always say they are better than you. This might make you feel hurt and judged and less confident.
- Sometimes, we don't have a choice about who we are around. This can happen at work or in our families. Just try to be around people who encourage as often as you can.

6. Take positive action!

- Take part in activities that you enjoy. If you like bowling or walking or fishing, do that more often.
- Join a community group that makes you feel happy and respected.
- Go online. There are online communities such as Facebook groups. Many welcome new members and are positive about each other's comments. There are many social media apps for chatting and sharing. You can choose what and who make you feel good about yourself. But, be careful because social media can also be negative as we will discuss later.
- Volunteer for something that matters to you. Doing something you feel good about increases your self-confidence.

- Feel better about yourself physically. Do regular physical activity. Even walking for a half hour per day makes a big difference.
- Get outside in nature. For many, nature has a calming, positive effect. Give it a try!
- Learn a new skill. (Be sure to ask your literacy practitioner about this!).

7. Try not to compare yourself to others

- Comparisons are not helpful. They can even make us feel badly about ourselves.
- Try not to compare yourself to others. Unfortunately, this is hard not to do, and almost everyone does it.
- As much as you can, think about your own strengths and don't compare. Also, remember that everyone has problems. They just might be more private about theirs.
- On social media people often compare themselves. We will talk about that next.

8. Look at your social media

- Social media sometimes has a negative effect on people's self-confidence. Too often people compare themselves negatively to others.
- Some people always post about their great lives on Facebook. You may have heard the saying "*Facebook is not the real world*". Their real lives are likely not as perfect as they post!
- Cruel comments and bullying can easily happen on social media.
- Here are some things you can do about this unkind behaviour.
 - You can unfriend or block people who are hurtful.
 - You can report bullying or harassing behaviour to the social media platform.
 - You can avoid groups or whole sites that you don't like.
 - If any social media makes you feel bad about yourself, stop using it...
- For others, social media can have a positive impact. They may meet new friends. They could join a group that support issues that matter to them.
- The important thing is where you go on social media. Stay away from people, groups or sites that hurt or upset you. Instead, look for ways social media can build your self-confidence.

9. Be Kind to Yourself

When people lack self-confidence, they can be critical of themselves. Don't do this to yourself! If you make a mistake or say or do something wrong, forgive yourself. **We all make mistakes sometimes.** If you need to apologize for something, do so. Then, forgive yourself and move on.

- Remember – people often learn more from their mistakes than from their successes.
- Sometimes, people can talk unkindly about themselves. They may say things like:
 - *How could I be so stupid?*
 - *Everyone noticed my mistake. I feel so foolish.*
 - *I'm not as good as other people.*
- You may sometimes say unkind things to yourself. What if a good friend made a mistake or did the wrong thing. Would you talk to them that way? ~~to~~ You would probably be kind to your friend and say things like:
 - *Don't worry – everyone makes mistakes.*
 - *Just try again – I am sure you will get it right the next time.*
 - *You were brave to try something new – it's okay that it didn't work out.*
- The next time you start to be hard on yourself, **stop**. Be kinder and more accepting. Try to say things to yourself that you would say to a good friend.



Talk to yourself like you would talk to someone you love.”

Brené Brown



Something to Think About...

What are two things you could do to build your self-confidence?

Share your thoughts with another learner or practitioner.

Section 6 – Supporting Activity – Positive Affirmation

The following activity incorporates elements of the Ontario Adult Literacy Curriculum Framework's (OALCF) Competencies with Level 1 and 2 Tasks and Indicators. While the activity also contains other Skills for Success, in this resource we are focussing on [Adaptability](#).

Detailed information about the components and proficiency levels for all of the **nine Skills for Success** (SFS) is available on the Government of Canada's [SFS website](#).

Instructions for Practitioners

After sharing the content from this resource with the learner(s), you can ask them to complete the following activity. This activity is suitable for an individual learner or for a small group of learners. This activity:

- reinforces the importance of being kind to yourself
- encourages reflection on your skill sets and personal strengths
- builds self-confidence through positivity
- encourages developing self-confidence to pursue and achieve your goals

The OALCF Competency, Task Group and Level indicators, and Skills for Success components and proficiencies in this activity can be used to discuss performance, determine skill progression, and identify some possible next steps to further develop learner proficiency.

Tasks 1 - 6 incorporate various skill components and elements of Entry Level proficiency (Skills for Success) from the skill of Adaptability.

ACTIVITY

This activity requires three blank index cards and a pen or coloured markers. A copy of the Adaptability Components Chart will also be required.

Task 1 – Reflection about positive qualities or skills where self-confidence is present

In Section 3, we talked about ways to build your self-confidence and to think about yourself in a positive way.

Ask the learner(s) to think about what they like about themselves or things they can do well.

Practitioners can provide examples to help learners think about these qualities:

- I am good at fixing cars
- I am a good listener
- I am a kind person
- I do good things for other people
- I make friends easily
- I am a good driver
- I am thoughtful
- I am brave

Ask the learner(s) to talk to another learner or practitioner about their positive qualities or skills.

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

- Task Group: Interact with others (B1)
 - B1.1 Participate in brief interactions to exchange information with one other person

Task 2 – Identify qualities or skills that you feel positive about

Ask the learner(s) to use the two blank index cards to write down **two** positive statements about themselves – one statement per card - that starts with “I am” or “I can”. Explain that these are often called “Affirmation Statements”. These are statements that reinforce positive thinking or actions.

Practitioners can help learners identify qualities or skills (the examples can be used).

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

- Task Group: Communicate ideas and information (B2)
 - B2.1 Write brief texts to convey simple ideas and factual information

Task 3 – Self-Reflection about qualities or skills where confidence is lacking

Ask the learner(s) to think about qualities or skills they don’t feel as confident about or that they would like to change. Remind them to be kind to themselves while thinking about these qualities.

Practitioners can provide examples to help learners think about these qualities:

- Sometimes, I don’t pay attention when people talk to me
- I don't always do my homework because I'm afraid I won't be right
- I am not confident when I talk to people that I don’t know
- I would like to learn more about being a carpenter

Task 4 – Identify a quality or skill that you don’t feel confident about

Reinforce to the learner(s) that it is important to remember that we can also build and change qualities and skills that we don’t feel as confident about for the better.

Talk with the learner(s) about how adapting or changing the way you look at yourself and your unique qualities and skills can make a difference in how you move forward in your life.

Based on the self-reflection in the previous task, ask the learner(s) to use a blank index card to write down **one** of the qualities or skills that they would like to feel more confident about in a positive way. This is done by removing negative words or using “I am” or “I can”.

**Practitioners can help learners identify the quality or skill (examples from task 3 can be used).
Practitioners can help learners with the re-wording. The following examples can be used.**

- “I don’t pay attention when people talk to me” changes to “I pay attention when people talk to me”
- “I don’t do my homework” changes to “I do my homework”
- “I am not confident when I talk to people that I don’t know” changes to “I am confident talking to other people”
- “I would like to learn more about being a carpenter” changes to “I can learn about being a carpenter”

This task incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competency:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

- Task Group: Communicate ideas and information (B2)
 - B2.1 Write brief texts to convey simple ideas and factual information

Task 5 – Building self-confidence by using the affirmation cards

Talk to the learner(s) about how they can use these cards to build their self-confidence. Making affirmation cards is a great strategy for reinforcing different qualities or skills that are required for different goals. Encourage learners to consider making more of these cards in the future as they are great self-confidence boosters.

For example, the following affirmations are positive reinforcement for future goals:

- I can learn new things
- I can do great things
- I am a good student

The following examples are wonderful for building self-confidence in general:

- I am a caring parent
- I am a great friend
- I am a positive person
- I take excellent care of my home
- I am a good pet owner

Reading affirmation cards out loud every day can be useful in reminding yourself about what you are able to do. Reading the cards out loud are like giving yourself a pep talk and can make you feel good about your qualities and skills.

Task 6 – Adaptability Components Chart

This chart encourages self-reflection and reinforces some of the Adaptability skill components used in the first 5 tasks.

Practitioner assistance may be required to support the learner(s) with lower skill levels as they complete the chart.

This chart can be adapted to reflect the Adaptability skill components to suit individual learner's goals and skill levels. The full components list is available on the [Skills for Success website](#).

The wording of the skill components has been simplified in the following chart to better meet the needs of adults in Literacy and Basic Skills programs.

Ask the learner(s) to complete the Adaptability Components Chart using checkmarks to show how they used some of the Adaptability skills when they created their affirmation card.

Practitioner instructions to learner(s):

Earlier, we discussed different ways to build your self-confidence. In our activity, you made two affirmation cards that stated qualities or skills that you feel confident about. You also created one affirmation card for a quality or skill that you would like to feel more confident about.

The questions in this chart are about ways you might have used the skill of adaptability to complete the activity.

Place a checkmark beside each question to show how you used adaptability in the activity.

When you thought about your self-confidence or lack of self-confidence:	A lot	A little	Not at all
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were you kind to yourself? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you think about your current strong qualities and skills? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you think about your qualities and skills in a positive way? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you think about qualities or skills to improve? 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you think about qualities or skills where more self-confidence could be useful in meeting future goals? 			

This chart incorporates elements of the following OALCF Competencies and Task Groups:

Competency B: Communicate Ideas and Information

- Task Group: Complete and create documents (B3)
 - B3.2 a Use layout to determine where to make entries in simple documents

Competency E: Manage Learning

- Task Group: No Task Group
 - E.1 Set short-term goals, begin to use limited learning strategies, and begin to monitor own learning