

Dangers of self-esteem

Self-esteem means feeling you are great and thinking and believing you are great.

Many "experts" make it the be all and end all.

The problems will be surveyed below. The analysis from a God perspective will be dealt with in red.

CLAIM: "High self esteem makes our lives work."

The case against this is that having it a little low helps us get motivated to try and do better in life. And people with high self esteem do kill and take drugs.

The notion that your life is a mess for you have not developed your self-esteem enough blames you for all your problems.

It will lead to hatred for those who have difficulties. You will not be able to be patient with them.

Some use the idea, "God made me for I am too wonderful not to be made" to bolster their self-esteem. That means that if it is bad then this only makes it worse for it makes it stronger. It takes grave arrogance to think that God gives you the gift of thinking nothing matters as much as how great you feel about yourself! That is putting yourself on God's throne.

CLAIM: "You only need to decide to love and esteem yourself."

It is not that easy. Self-esteem has to be earned by doing good for others. It is not something you aim for you but something you allow to happen. It won't just happen. The self esteem that selfish uncaring people have is a delusion. You want real self-esteem not a shabby form of self-deception.

If God gives self-esteem as his main gift then the claim could make sense if it means God gives you grace. Grace bypasses nature and time.

CLAIM: "Each person must work hard to be happy."

The bad side of happiness is that it can lead to a lack of compassion where you blame the unhappy for how they feel. You think you are wiser than them for you know how to be happy.

What makes us happy fades and then we end up looking for something else to make us happy.

It could be that people who are not that happy can't because of their biology be any happier.

Happiness that comes from doing good is more stable than trying to be happy any other way. Marrying does not make you happy but putting the mate first does.

CLAIM: "If you feel bad or angry find a way to let it out. Maybe write about it. It takes great self-esteem to have the courage to unleash how you feel."

But often letting the feelings out helps them boost themselves and you end up worse of. It depends. It is not always the best thing to unleash how you feel.

CLAIM: "Assertiveness is necessary always."

The case against assertiveness is that it is manipulative. You are trying to get one over on the person who is offending you or thwarting your rights. Assertiveness always uses a strategy that aims to disarm the person who is standing in the way of your rights or supposed rights. You make the person feel you are listening to them as if you care. There is no respect underneath it all which is why assertiveness is in act just passive aggression under a different name.

Nobody likes somebody who is always asserting and it wears thin.

CLAIM: "Strive to have the ultimate say over all that happens in your life for you can."

People who feel trapped for one reason or another cope by creating an illusion that they have more control than they do. They can do this on purpose but the brain as Whitson and Galinsky (2008) showed, is expert at that on its own. Those who

are unjustly imprisoned might imagine that they see patterns that God is working to get them out. They may feel they get help to control their response to their plight by praying and getting comfort from him. They hope to be happy with nothing! They may be casting spells. As faith is expected for their illusion to work, they have to try and look for signs and patterns to bolster their faith and become more and more convinced.

The idea that it is up to you to control it all can be very pressuring and stressful. And you will blame yourself for things that were not really your fault at all and over which you can no control. And you will blame others for their problems.

Passive people who say they want God to deal with their future are in fact just exercising a sense of control in a less obvious way. Its crafty. The person who tries to control their life the natural way knows they can be wrong. But the believer in God protects herself by saying that control is always there in full force no matter how bad or chaotic things seem. It is like the idea that when God walks with you you see two sets of footprints but when you are in trouble you only see one set: his for he is carrying you. Who is the biggest would-be controller? It is the one who lines up to God to get control. The person who is more actively controlling is not as bad for it will become apparent that he cannot feel in control all the time. The urge for control is seen as a bad thing. It is a bad trait in human nature. Why? Being natural does not make it good. The trait is the fundamental reason why we are trouble for ourselves and for others. But feeling not in control feels scary and bad. That however is no justification for trying to feel in control. If we say God is right to kill babies and make deadly viruses so we can feel in control we are a disgrace. That is tantamount to disrespect. If we want control then keep it natural and don't be trying to bring in the supernatural for support. That is taking control at the risk of losing the reality check.