Inside out
Glenys Bridges helps put confidence into practice

Having confidence in your daily working life is key to creating a positive and supportive environment for your staff and patients. It's important to maintain an upbeat, confident and positive outlook, which can help you to achieve your goals and succeed in your job.

Here are some suggestions about how to lift your mood and confidence levels at challenging times:

**Firstly,** it is almost impossible to achieve a negative emotion if you feel confident. So, try to think positively about things that are making you feel anxious, stressed or overwhelmed. For example, if you are starting to feel anxious, try to visualise yourself successfully managing a situation that is causing you concern. You will feel much more upbeat.

**Secondly,** when you look up, this accesses your visual cortex, bringing two benefits. It allows you to focus on positive outcomes and think about how you are going to handle events, or situations that are causing you concern. You will feel much more upbeat.

It is very important to maintain your physical self at challenging times. Eat healthily, drinking sensibly, start the day with a breakfast that sets you up for your day ahead and do everything possible to get a good night’s sleep.

When something knocks you back or your inner critic starts to undermine your confidence and your mood and you become overwhelmed by a negative emotion, you need to transform it. Watch out for physical changes in your body that indicate a change in your thoughts and feelings. The change could be a tensing of your shoulders or your neck, a head- ache, a sinking feeling in your stomach or some other physical change that indicates you are no longer in a confident, positive mood. Be aware of the physical signals that you are slipping into a less-than-positive state?

To quickly snap out of a negative mood or state of mind simply look up, this accesses your visual cortex, bringing two benefits. Firstly, it is almost impossible to experience a negative emotion if you feel confident. Secondly, when you look up and access your visual cortex it is much easier to visualise how you are going to handle things. This is very useful if you are starting to feel anxious, stressed, angry or under confident in a particular situation.

If possible, take time out and physically remove yourself from a situation that is making you feel negative or undermining your confidence, even if this means going for a short walk. This can help you to disassociate and leave your negative emotions behind. If it is possible to go for a short walk, that will be even better.

It is essential that dental professionals maintain their personal skills and provide patients with the best possible dental care. Before we can offer the best care to our patients we need to care for ourselves and ensure the confidence we offer outwardly is sourced from a genuine inner wellbeing.

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