

# Building Self-Confidence

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

To be successful in managing their diabetes, people need to be able to set goals, make plans, monitor progress, and deal with setbacks. Self-confidence in one's own strengths and abilities helps promote resiliency. Self-doubt is normal. Many people doubt themselves, especially when faced with a new challenge. Positive encouragement can help people overcome self-doubt and more successfully take on the challenges of managing diabetes.

## By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Identify at least three thoughts or actions that can lead to self-doubt.
- Name at least three positive thoughts or actions for building self-confidence.
- Describe at least three thoughts or behaviors that people with diabetes can use to become more resilient and set themselves up for success in reaching their goals.

## MODULE 4

🕒 **DISCUSSION TIME**  
45-60 minutes

- 📋 **OUTLINE**
1. Being your own best friend
  2. Setting yourself up for success

## ☆ KEY MESSAGES

1. Being resilient means being able to recover from challenges and obstacles more quickly.

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2. Self-confidence in one's skills and abilities, as well as awareness of available support systems, can help promote resiliency.

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3. Self-doubt can hold people back from making and sustaining healthy changes.

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4. People can learn to overcome self-doubt by setting goals and planning for how to handle potential challenges.

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## 🔗 CONNECTING THREADS

Connecting Threads are topics that can be incorporated into *New Beginnings* sessions depending on the goals and needs of your participants.

Recommended Connecting Threads:

- [Facilitating \*New Beginnings\* Online](#)
- [Commit to Quit: Stopping Smoking](#)
- [Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support Services](#)
- [Building Social Connections in Family and Community Circles](#)
- [Spirituality as a Guide and Support](#)

## 🖱️ GOING VIRTUAL TIPS

- Adapt the [Be Your Own Best Friend Worksheet](#) into a group activity where participants share how they've experienced being their own best friend or brainstorm as a group using the virtual whiteboard how to be a better best friend to yourself.
- The content on the [Making a Plan Worksheet](#) can be shared as a Microsoft Word document or Google Doc before the session or as an at-home activity. Group members can then fill it in online without having to print it.
- The video stories for this module can be played by sharing your screen (and computer audio) through your video teleconferencing platform. Another option is to share the links to the videos with your group members by email before the session starts.
- The audio stories can be inserted into the [New Beginnings PowerPoint template](#) along with images that reflect the story.



## MATERIALS

Suggested stories for this module:

- [Yvonne’s Story A](#): Yvonne talks about how she learned she had type 2 diabetes and overcame denial to make the lifestyle choices to manage her diabetes. (Audio: about 4 minutes)
- [Setting Goals to Improve Your Health](#): Experts share tips for setting achievable goals to manage diabetes. (Video: about 3 minutes)

Handouts:

- [Be Your Own Best Friend Worksheet](#)
- [Making a Plan Worksheet](#)

# Group Discussion

This discussion focuses on overcoming self-doubt and becoming more confident in managing diabetes.

## Being Your Own Best Friend

### GROUP LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

### TALKING POINTS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



#### LISTEN:

[Yvonne’s Story A](#) (Audio: about 4 minutes)



#### ASK:

What are some actions the character takes that work against her?  
Why do you think she does them?



#### SAY:

Sometimes, we can describe the way we treat ourselves or the actions we take as acting as “our own best friend” or “our own worst enemy.”  
This means that sometimes what we do works best for us, while other actions can make things worse for us.



#### ASK:

- What does it mean to be your own best friend?
- What kind of actions does a best friend take to help you?
- What does it mean to be your own worst enemy? What are the things that someone’s worst enemy would say?



**SAY:**

Sometimes the reason a person does something is not a factual explanation but an attitude or an emotion that leads to self-doubt.

- A best friend reminds you how you have already succeeded. You may not have met your A1C goal, but you may be halfway there and that is something to be proud of.
- A best friend reminds you that if you keep trying, you can make it.
- A best friend might not be as hard on you as you are on yourself.
- A best friend would help you solve problems. If something didn't work, your best friend would help you figure out why it did not work and what else you can try. They would remind you of what has worked for you in the past. A best friend would not blame you. They would look for ways to help you try again.
- A best friend would not let you give up.
- A best friend would give you a "reality check." Instead of setting a goal to run a marathon before you are ready, a best friend would help you set a more manageable goal of getting an extra 30 minutes of activity this week.
- A best friend would remind you to think about what is most important to you.



**ASK:**

How does the character in the story behave like her own best friend? (or How could the character act like her own best friend?)

Could you relate to the character? Why or why not?



**ACTIVITY:**

Think-Pair-Share: Your Own Best Friend

- Hand out the [Be Your Own Best Friend Worksheet](#).
- Ask participants to review the examples on the worksheet and fill in their own examples.
- Ask participants to pair up with another member of the group and discuss how they can be their own best friend.
- Ask one member of each pair to share key points from their discussion.



**ACTIVITY:**

Activity variations:

- Ask participants to think back to a stressful time in their life and imagine what they would tell themselves if they could go back and be their own best friend. Ask them to share their positive thoughts with their partner.
- Ask participants to think about a challenge they are currently facing. How can they be their own best friend? Ask them to share their ideas with their partner.
- Ask participants to think about some of their current goals. Are they setting themselves up for failure or success? How can they better set themselves up for success? Ask them to share their ideas with their partner.
- Ask participants to pair up and role play a situation where they offer feedback on a challenge as a worst enemy would and then as a best friend would. Discuss how the approaches differ.



**ASK:**

Are you ever your own worst enemy? Can you give examples?

*Examples:*

- *Feeling guilty.*
- *Telling yourself that you are no good, that you can't do anything right, that you brought this on yourself, and that you'll never change.*
- *Worrying about everyone else, so that you don't take care of yourself.*
- *Feeling fearful of facing the truth.*
- *Seeking out people who are even worse off than you so that you can feel better, but who lead you to do unhealthy things like drinking too much alcohol.*
- *Seeking out people who make you think you cannot do better.*
- *Blaming others instead of making changes.*
- *Being angry (at yourself, at others, at how unfair life is).*



Are you ever your own best friend? Can you give examples?

*Examples:*

- *Telling yourself you can do it.*
- *“Patting yourself on the back” for trying to make good changes, including small ones.*
- *Giving yourself credit for problem solving.*
- *Asking for what you need, such as help with getting more physical activity, restaurant food that is prepared healthfully, or kind words instead of criticisms from friends and family.*
- *Sharing your fears instead of always trying to be the “pillar of strength” for everyone else.*
- *Seeking out people who have faced similar challenges and overcome them.*
- *Seeking out positive people who have positive energy and an upbeat attitude.*
- *Telling yourself that you deserve to have a healthy body, a second chance, time to yourself, the right to love yourself the way you are, and the right to ask for help.*



- **Don't beat up on yourself, as a worst enemy might, when you have moments where you aren't able to follow the steps you set for yourself.** It can be hard to break old habits, or you might be faced with an unexpected challenge. Take a pause and reflect on what you have achieved so far, refocus on your goals, and map out the next small step(s) you can take towards achieving them
- **Be kind to yourself.** Imagine putting an arm around yourself and thinking about what you could say that would be helpful. Everyone needs comfort, but perhaps it can be from a hot bath, a phone call to an old friend, or a walk with your dog, instead of from something that might get in the way of your goals.
- **Sometimes being your own best friend means allowing yourself to grieve.** Let out your emotions about a feeling of loss (of independence, of a loved one, of your health) or about your fears (of possible complications of diabetes, of disability, of death) so you can move on. A best friend wouldn't tell you to "just hold it all in."

When we choose to act more like a best friend than an enemy to ourselves, we will be better able to:

- Shine a light on our strengths and feel more confident in our successes.
- Be more resilient when it comes to facing our struggles and challenges.



## ACTIVITY

### Your Own Best Friend Versus Your Own Worst Enemy

The goal of this activity is for participants to learn how to coach themselves with positive and comforting thoughts.

- Ask participants to picture a best friend leaning over one shoulder and a worst enemy hovering over the other.
  - A worst enemy doesn't just tempt you with overeating or other unhealthy behaviors; they also beat up on you emotionally so that you keep hurting yourself.
  - A best friend puts a comforting arm around your shoulder, offers a kind helping hand, and asks you to forgive yourself so you can do better next time.
- Hand out paper, pens or pencils, and envelopes. Ask participants to address the envelopes to themselves.
- Ask participants to imagine being their own best friend and write themselves encouraging letters. Ask participants to seal the letter in the envelope and turn it in to the discussion leader or facilitator.
- Mail the letters two days after the session.

# Setting Yourself Up for Success

## GROUP LEADER INSTRUCTIONS

## TALKING POINTS AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



**ASK:**

Your worst enemy would set you up for failure by putting you in a situation where you could not possibly be successful, or by setting unrealistic goals. What else would your worst enemy do to set you up for failure?



**ASK:**

On the other hand, your best friend would set you up for success by helping you set SMART goals that are realistic and achievable, so you feel proud of yourself when you reach the goal or make a positive step towards reaching it. What else would your best friend do to set you up for success?



**ASK:**

Can you think of examples from the story where the character set herself up for failure?

*Write responses on the flipchart paper.*

*Examples: Set a goal that was not specific, set too many goals, set a goal that was too hard for her current knowledge or skill level, set goals based on what was important to other people instead of what was important to her.*



**ASK:**

Can you think of examples where the character set herself up for success? OR What do you think the character could have done to set himself/herself up for success?

*Write responses on the flipchart paper.*

*Examples: Set a goal she could achieve, decided exactly what she needed to do to be successful, kept going even when it was hard, set a goal she could be proud of achieving.*



**WATCH:**

*Optional*

[Setting Goals to Improve Your Health](#): (Video: about 3 minutes)



Setting yourself up for success means:

- Setting goals (see goal setting in [Module 2](#)).
- Choosing goals that are not too difficult, but not too easy.
- Developing a specific plan for how you will achieve your goal. For example, I will work on lowering my A1C by one point by my next appointment by taking my medication every day and taking a walk once a day.
- Choosing behaviors that feel right for you. Walking might work for some people, but if you would rather dance, then you should dance!
- Keeping track of your progress. Reward yourself for taking steps toward your goal.
- Figuring out what happened when something goes wrong. For example, don't think, "I missed my walk because I'm weak." Think, "I missed my walk because I had too many things on my schedule today. How can I manage my time better?" This will help you identify specific actions you can take to solve the problem.
- Not beating up on yourself. Tomorrow will bring another chance to try again.
- Reminding yourself that you can do it.
- Taking what you have learned from your successes and applying this to what you need to do next.



### Set Yourself Up for Success

The goal of this activity is for participants to set or improve SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely, and trackable) goals and develop a plan for achieving them.

Ask participants to pick a goal they would like to work toward and do the [Making a Plan Worksheet](#).

Ask if anyone would like to share their plan with the rest of the group. Applaud each person who shares their plan.

*Be careful about allowing participants to comment on the plans of others unless the person who shared specifically asks for advice from the group. The goal is to encourage people to identify ways to solve their own problems. Unsolicited advice can make people feel less empowered. Ask the group to give themselves a round of applause for setting goals to improve their health.*

## CLOSE THE SESSION

- Take final questions.
- Thank the group for their participation.
- Explain the at-home activity, if applicable.
- Remind participants about the next session. Ask if they have specific questions or issues they would like addressed.
- Ask participants to do the session evaluation.



### AT-HOME ACTIVITY

- Ask participants to do the [Be Your Own Best Friend Worksheet](#) if they did not do it during the session.
- Ask participants to do the goal-setting activity or review their goals if they did not do it during the session.

## RESOURCES

Use these resources to learn more about building self-confidence, expand the discussion, or provide additional resources to participants.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - [Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support \(DSMES\) Services](#)
- American Psychological Association:
  - [Building Your Resilience](#)
- Mayo Clinic:
  - [Build Resilience to Better Handle Diabetes](#)
- Association of Diabetes Care & Education Specialists:
  - [Healthy Coping](#)
  - [Problem Solving](#)



## REFERENCES

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