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## MAINTAINING SELF-ESTEEM AGAINST ALL ODDS

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The customary educational approach to self esteem - little is bad, more is good - is proving to be overly simplistic. Recent research indicates that high self esteem is not to be excessively valued.

In a recent video, Dr. Jennifer Crocker, and Dr. Roy Baumeister, explain how people maintain self-esteem against all odds and in unlikely situations.

Crocker and Baumeister reveal why self-esteem is important, but also explain that self-esteem is not as important to some aspects of life as commonly accepted.

They answer such questions as:

- is losing self-esteem more important to one's mental health than gaining self-esteem?
- do bullies have high or low self-esteem?
- how do society's messages and prejudices shape

self-esteem?

- how do those who are traditionally discriminated against maintain their self-esteem?
- what characteristics are common to those with high self-esteem?

For groups commonly believed to have low self-esteem, such as women and minorities, Crocker and Baumeister reveal that such groups do not in fact suffer from low self-esteem.

They discuss the strategies groups utilize to protect themselves from negative messages they receive from society. These methods include devaluing the subject area, comparing oneself only to others who are similarly situated, and blaming any failure or incompetence on discrimination itself.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION - See *Maintaining Self Esteem Against All Odds* <http://www.ideachannel.com/Psychology.htm>**

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## LEADING THE SCHOOL AND DISTRICT

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The moment to moment management of a school or district leaves little time to think about the leadership dynamics impacting on those in the organization. In a seven page report, a leadership roundtable discussion focuses on:

- what leaders ought to do
- the need to formulate and communicate a vision for an organization
- the need for a leader to add value to an enterprise
- an organizational imperative for a leader to

motivate followers

- how leaders ought to lead
- the leadership role of the generalist in organizations
- the need to remain calm and decisive in a crisis
- developing new leaders
- rewarding extraordinary effort
- keeping organizations focused on their missions.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION - See *All In A Day's Work* - [http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/b01/en/common/item\\_detail.jhtml?id=R0111D](http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/b01/en/common/item_detail.jhtml?id=R0111D)**

**“Many well-intentioned reformers argue that large scale improvement of schools can be accomplished by recruiting, rewarding, and retaining good people and releasing them from the bounds of bureaucracy to do what they know how to do. Schools get better, in this view, by attracting and empowering good people. It’s not hard to see why this view is so widely held among educators. It accords well with the existing institutional structure. The properties of system inhere in the personal qualities of the people in it, not in the system itself. To the minds of these reformers the job of the system is to stay out of the business of the gifted practitioners who work in it and to keep the outside world at bay. The problem with this view, of course, is that it produces ‘good’ practice and performance only from those people who already embody the personal attributes and characteristics that make good practice and performance possible. We know that this proportion seldom grows larger than about one-quarter or one-third of the total population of classrooms, schools, or systems.**

**What’s missing in this view is any recognition that improvement is more a function of learning to do the right things in the setting where you work than it is of what you know when you start to do the work. Improvement at scale is largely a property of organizations, not of pre-existing traits of the individuals who work in them.”**

From *Building A New Structure For School Leadership*, “Learning To Do The Right Things: Issues of Institutional Design and Practice” by Richard F. Elmore, [www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/building.pdf](http://www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/building.pdf)