What is confidence ?

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Hello, my name is Runa Shinzato. This is my first time speaking in English in front of everyone, so I'd be happy if you could give me lots of encouragement.

Today, I'm going to talk about a change in my perspective on confidence.

First, I want to ask everyone: "What do you think makes people have confidence in themselves?"

When I failed at something in my part-time job for example, I always felt stressed and lacking in self-respect and confidence. That's because I had thought that evaluation from others determined my self-worth. However, I learned that nobody can be perfect from the beginning. I eventually came to think about what confidence and self-esteem are, and what makes a person feel confident.

When I was a junior high school student, this was the time I had the most confidence. When my teacher praised me for my grades, my confidence grew and I was satisfied with that confidence. But when I entered high school, I was overwhelmed by others who seemed like they had many achievements and their grades were better than mine.

At that time, I had thought confidence comes from qualifications and evaluation from others. However, I realized that the confidence that comes from these elements is fragile. So then, what do we do to get confidence – real confidence? To be honest, I'm not sure myself.

But, in my opinion, confidence will grow if I respect myself. I ask myself therefore, am I moving towards my goals, and am I achieving what I need?

You may have had an experience like when you decide to get up early, but then you couldn't. So, you don't feel like doing anything. Confidence is eroded by small things like this.

On the other hand, we can build confidence by making small achievements. For instance, try to concentrate on something every 10 minutes, and read a book a month. For an easier goal, try to wake up early tomorrow and make an elaborate breakfast. We can get a sense of accomplishment by achieving these kinds of small goals. It leads to valuing yourself in the end.

But, if you can’t achieve the goal, you don’t have to lose heart. It’s important to try something and connect the failures to successes. What’s more, the process itself will build your confidence.

Through many changes, I realized that I always care about what others think more than I thought and I’ve been influenced by others’ evaluation of me too much.
Furthermore, when I thought the evaluation from others determined my self-worth, I couldn’t think about myself. In that sense, I’m thankful for failures.

In conclusion, I wanted to talk about this today, because I wanted everyone to know this perspective of mine. This viewpoint is especially for people who have never had a chance to think about this and don’t have confidence. Then, I want to think about how to get confidence for myself.
Also, I hope that my speech will provide an opportunity for others to rethink their own perspectives.

Thank you for listening.