



Manage Self Talk and Improve Your Life

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Self-talk is an integral constant in your life. You start talking to yourself when you wake up in the morning and don't stop until you fall asleep at night. Who would've thought you had so much to say? Right? But you do!

When self-talk is positive and helpful, amazing things can happen. When self-talk is negative, life can be much more challenging than it has to be.

Like much of who you are, your style of self-talk is a habit that has been molded by your experiences and environment. Imagine how your life could change for the better if you were able to alter your self-talk into something more supporting and encouraging.

You can start living that life today! Just follow these simple steps to get started:

- 1. Make a list of your negative self-talk phrases and attitudes.** For 24 hours, record everything you say to yourself that isn't supportive, regardless of whether or not you think it's true. Here are a few examples to get you thinking:
 - "He would never want to talk to me."
 - "I'm not good enough for that."
 - "I could never do that."
 - "Things will never get better."

2. Prioritize your list. Which items have the greatest negative impact on your life and your sense of happiness? Put the list in order, from greatest negative impact to least.

- Prioritizing is important because it will naturally force you to spend your time on the most important items.

3. Create a new list. Now that you've made your list, you're going to improve it. Convert at least the first 10 items on your list into positive thoughts. If you're feeling motivated, you can rewrite as many more as you like.

- ***Even if you don't believe the new, positive idea, just change it into a positive version.*** For example, "I could never do that" changes to, "I can do anything I set my mind to."

4. Change your thinking. Now, for the challenging part. Each time you catch yourself engaging in self-talk matching an item from your list, substitute the new self-talk expression.

- Be diligent at all times. Considering how many times you may have said the negative item to yourself, this new practice will require a lot of attention. ***The good news is that over time, the positive things you say to yourself will become a habit, too!***

5. Move further down the list. After you've conquered the 10 most negative items, look at the list and consider how it would improve your life to change those remaining negative self-talk items. You may have formed such positive habits with your first 10 items that the rest of them might not really be applicable anymore!

Self-talk will always be there, so it will benefit you to exercise some control over it. Anything you hear over and over again, you start to believe. That's the way our minds work.

The first step to gaining that control is to monitor your thoughts and feelings. Then the necessary steps can be taken to change it for the better. ***As with all habits, these self-talk patterns can be challenging to change, but doing so will really boost your happiness.*** Get started today!