



THE POWER OF SELF-TALK

**Key
Techniques**

By The American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
The Power of Self-Talk.....	3
How Self-Talk Works.....	3
Polarizing	3
Personalizing	3
Catastrophizing	3
Magnifying.....	3
Key Techniques To Adopt Positive Self Talk Habits.....	5
A Higher Purpose	5
Dealing With Negative People	5
Express Gratitude	5
No Comparisons	6
Positive Words	6
Self-Belief.....	6
Failure Is An Option.....	7
Positivity > Negativity.....	7
Affirmations.....	7
Move On	8
Visualize Success	8
Assist Others	8
Dream Big	9
Be Active	9
Limited Intake	9
Final Thoughts	11

Disclaimer: The information contained in this eBook is strictly for informational purposes. Every possible effort has been made in preparing and researching this material. We make no warranties with respect to the accuracy, applicability of its contents or any omissions.

Introduction

Right now, whether you realize it or not, there is a set of messages playing in your mind. It's your internal dialogue or your self-talk. It frames your reactions to the circumstances and events of life. One of the most effective ways to promote, recognize, and sustain hope, joy, and optimism is by intentionally filling your mind with positive self-talk.

Unfortunately, we are often trapped in a cycle of negative self-talk. We find it difficult to let go of the negative things we heard as children, whether it's from teachers, parents, friends or siblings. Those things stick with us because they sting.

As children, we take it to heart. We don't consider whether it's true or not. We allow the negative opinions and reactions from others to diminish our self-confidence. Over the years, we have allowed these messages to play on repeat in our minds. It fuels guilt, anger, hopelessness, and fear.

One of the greatest tools therapists use is digging deep to find the source of the negative messages. This is a tool that you can use, and you don't need to visit a therapist to do it. Once you have identified the source of the messages and the negative messages themselves, you can start to overwrite them. For example, as a child, Marshall constantly received a message telling him that he was worthless.

No one showed Marshall as a child that he was valuable, loved, and worthy. In order to overwrite that message, Marshall needs to learn that he's special. Another example would be Marsha. She learned up in a disruptive home where she constantly faced crisis and destructive events were normal. For Marsha, she needs to learn how to anticipate a better future, rather than waiting for the next crisis.

That's the power of self-talk. Your inner dialogue reveals a lot about you. It doesn't just reveal your ideas and thoughts, but your beliefs and the questions you have about yourself and life. While many of us experience negative self-talk, it is possible to practice positive self-talk. The former can be distressing.

An optimistic person will likely have positive self-talk, while pessimists will likely experience more negative self-talk. Of course, your mindset may also be heavily influenced by your self-talk. As we discussed above, we often pick up our self-talk habits in our childhood. That can be difficult to shake.

Optimism can be an effective tool for managing stress and improving your quality of life. If you believe your self-talk is overly negative, then it's possible to shift your self-talk. You can emphasize positivity in your inner dialogue.

The Power of Self-Talk

How powerful is self-talk? Not only can it enhance your overall performance, but it can also enhance your well-being. Positive self-talk is used by athletes to improve their performances. It can help them power through as they lift weights, to rise at 4 am to hit the gym.

Additionally, practicing positive self-talk comes with health benefits, such as improved cardiovascular health, pain reduction, an improvement in immunity and vitality, and less stress (<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/positive-thinking/art-20043950>).

While research shows that self-talk is powerful, we don't really know *why*. However, experts believe it's because positive self-talkers believe in themselves and their power to problem solve, think outside the box, act efficiently, and overcome when faced with challenge and hardship. This, of course, is a powerful tool in the battle against stress and anxiety.

How Self-Talk Works

Before you can overwrite your existing self-talk, you first must identify your negative thoughts. There are four main categories that self-talk falls into.

Polarizing

You see things in terms of good and bad. It's black or it's white, there is no for shades of gray or middle ground.

Personalizing

You constantly blame yourself for things that happen to you and to others as well.

Catastrophizing

You always imagine the worst-case scenario and you struggle to think logically to persuade yourself otherwise.

Magnifying

You completely focus on the negatives in a situation, unable to find the positive.

Once you recognize the type(s) of negative self-talk you are experiencing, it becomes easier to replace those thoughts with more positive ones. This will require time and practice and it isn't going to occur overnight. However, it can be done.

Below, we will provide several examples of how you can switch negative thoughts to positive ones.

Negative	Positive
If I change my mind it will disappoint everyone.	I control my thoughts and beliefs; others will just have to understand that.
It's embarrassing when I fail.	I was courageous enough to try and I'm proud of myself for trying.
Why bother trying to lose weight, I'm too out of shape to exercise.	I want to get healthy for me and I am strong and capable.
I let my colleagues down when I fail to secure new clients.	We're a team, we win together, and we lose together. I'll get the next one.
I'll probably be bad at this because I've never done it before.	This is an excellent opportunity for me to learn something new and grow as a person.
This is never going to work.	I'm going to put everything into this and make it work.

Key Techniques To Adopt Positive Self Talk Habits

So, how can you apply this to your daily life? Especially when your natural instinct is not to practice positive self-talk.

We have some key techniques that you can use to help adopt more positive self-talk habits.

A Higher Purpose

It may be your faith in a higher power or feeling connected to a higher purpose. Participating in this power or purpose is valuable to your self-talk. For the religious people reading this, that means attending services and spending time with people who encourage you in your faith.

For people looking to enhance their spirituality, but are not religious, then practicing mindfulness, meditation, and spending time in nature is helpful. Seeking a higher purpose is pursuing positive things. It's easier to be positive when you feel as though you have a purpose.

Dealing With Negative People

We all have bad days where we feel moody or express negative thoughts. However, if there are people in your life who seem to be experience down days daily... then you have to think about their position in your life. Moods are contagious and when you surround yourself with negative people, they fuel your negative thoughts. Don't allow others to bring you down when you're working hard to uplift yourself.

It's difficult to cut out colleagues and family, however, you can still avoid the negativity. Limit the time you spend with people you know are constantly negative.

Express Gratitude

If you want to encourage positive self-talk, then expressing gratitude is an excellent place to start. You can do this by keeping a gratitude journal or simply by writing out a list of things you're grateful for daily. Aim to record at least three things each day – whether they are big or small. It's all about focusing on the amazing things that are going on in your life, whether it's as simple as spotting a rainbow or grabbing coffee with a friend.

Expressing gratitude will make positive experiences and emotions more tangible, which helps you focus on goodness.

No Comparisons

If you constantly compare yourself to others, then it's easy to get down on yourself. When you compare yourself to your siblings, friends or other people in your life it's easy to get negative about your life. Don't allow yourself to get sucked into the comparison game.

Find the positives in everything you do and everything you have, rather than focusing on what you don't have. Remember, you never know the full story. So, your casual acquaintance may get a brand-new SUV every two years, but who knows what else is going on with their finances. You're living your life for you and it's your happiness that counts. You won't be happy if you're obsessed with what everyone else has.

Positive Words

It's easier to practice self-talk when you use positive words when speaking to and about others. The reverse stands true – if you're negative about others, then you're more likely to be negative about yourself.

How do you start your workday? When you arrive at work, what's your routine? Do you immediately find people to complain to? Or, are you chipper and glad to have a job that pays the bills? You choose whether the words you speak are negative or positive. You're more likely to replicate your inner feelings. So, go out of your way to use positive words when you speak and let this influence your self-talk.

It may also be helpful to learn to let go of the little things and focus on the positives. For example, rather than harping on about what your partner doesn't do to help around the house, thank them for what they do help you with. You still want them to do those other things, but they're more likely to help out if you focus on the positives

Self-Belief

Self-belief is important. You need to believe in your skills, abilities, and the traits you possess that will help you succeed. When you doubt yourself it holds you back, not just from succeeding but even from trying.

A lack of self-belief is essentially setting you up to fail. If you go into a situation believing that you will fail, then you are more likely to fail. Instead, tell yourself you've got this and that you're going to succeed.

Failure Is An Option

It's more than an option, it's an inevitability. When you try, you will experience failure. That's okay because it's how you *respond* to failure that matters. It's impossible to succeed without first tasting a measure or two of failure.

Don't allow the fear of failure to hold you back from tackling the challenges that stand in your way. Take failure as a lesson, apply what you've learned to your next endeavor, and succeed.

Positivity > Negativity

Negative thoughts are going to happen and it's impossible to be positive constantly. However, you can replace negative thoughts with more positive ones. Every situation has an upside if you look for it hard enough. That's the key to introducing positive thoughts to replace negative ones. If you focus on the negative, then you are holding yourself back and preventing yourself from trying.

Affirmations

One excellent way to encourage positive self-talk is to write your positive thoughts down. Affirmations are simply statements that provide you with a statement that boosts positivity.

You can stick them to the refrigerator, your computer screen, mirrors, and basically, everywhere and anywhere you'll see it. Having a variety of positive messages posted around your environment is going to help you positively shape your self-talk.

Just to give you an idea about some positive affirmations that you could use, the following are some examples:

- I'm adventurous.
- I'm in charge.
- I'm grateful.
- I choose gratitude. I choose happiness.
- Nobody on earth is like me, I am unique.
- I will use my day to show myself love.
- I will use my day to show others love.
- I always show myself kindness.
- I always show kindness to others.
- I will find joy in every situation.
- I have a higher purpose.
- I am a valuable person.

Move On

We all have a past, and we will all have regrets. You don't need to beat yourself up about it. We all have negative experiences and mistakes littering our past. Don't focus on those mistakes and failures. You should remain focused on the present and the possibilities of the future.

For example, you went through a difficult breakup, but you've found someone new. While you are excited about the new relationship you still hold ill will towards your ex-partner and how your relationship ended. You are angry because they cheated on you, but you reach a point where you need to move forward.

You can't continually bring your ex up, nor can you hold what your ex did against your current partner. They didn't sign up for a relationship with you and your ex. As difficult as it is to let go, you have to move on, and let go of that baggage. Don't allow it the space to breathe in your life. Suffocate it.

Visualize Success

If you would like to run ten miles, then visualize success. You have to envision the beginning of the process, the middle, and the end as well. Think about the preparation you will do before you run, what it will feel like to get started, how you will cope with the tough stretches, and how it will feel to do so.

When you visualize success you are essentially strategizing how you will tackle difficult challenges and overcome obstacles that you may face along the way.

Assist Others

By helping others it is a blessing to yourself. It instills positive feelings and makes you feel more empowered and optimistic. These types of positive emotions are going to help you improve your self-talk.

Do at least one thing every day that helps someone else. This will build a healthy habit and help you build your self-confidence. Hold the door open for your colleagues, smile when people make eye contact with you, grab a cup of coffee for your desk mate, offer people genuine compliments.

There is an endless list of things you can do for others without spending money. You can be a shining light in this dark world and improve your self-talk at the same time.

Dream Big

If you want to improve your self-talk, then it's important to dream big. What is your greatest desire for your life? What do you want? Where do you see yourself five years down the line? Ten years? 15, 20 years? You can start with big dreams and break them into smaller milestones that will help you get there.

You can motivate and encourage yourself by being supportive of yourself. With every small milestone you reach you can celebrate your success and enjoy a boost to your self-talk.

If you experience failure along the way, don't get down on yourself. It's okay, just keep going! You should learn to appreciate the fact that you are always willing to try. No one who achieves their dreams does so without running into difficult times. The true measure of an individual is their ability to overcome those challenges and bounce back. If at first you don't succeed...

Be Active

There are plenty of health benefits to staying active, but there's more to it than that. Getting physically active consistently helps you become a more creative person, it inspires self-confidence, relieves stress and anxiety, and makes you a more positive person. There is joy in exercise.

The process and the fact that you have pushed yourself off the couch and gotten yourself through an exercise routine. This is going to fill you with confidence and provide you with positive self-talk.

The feel-good hormones that exercise provides you with, well, those are just a happy bonus.

Limited Intake

One of the biggest negative influences we face is news and media. It doesn't matter what you believe or what side of the aisle you're on, the news cycle is predominantly negative. There are awful things happening all over the world and within our local communities as well. It's important to stay connected and know what's going on in the world around you, but it's equally as important to protect your mind.

You can be an informed citizen and still unplug now and then. Unplug from the internet, ignore social media, turn your television off, and shut out the negativity as often as possible.

If you start your morning by listening or watching the news and you find yourself feeling particularly negative, then start your day with a new habit. Perhaps calming music or a

podcast would be a better option. The best way to start your day is not listening to an hour of everything that's wrong with the world. You can seek out a brief recap of the news and choose uplifting media for the rest of your commute.

Limit the time you spend consuming negative news, energy-draining media, and content that upsets you. When you watch, read or listen to the news, follow it up with positive content.

It's all about balance as opposed to constantly allowing yourself to be exposed to all the negativity in the world. This is especially important for highly sensitive people and empaths.

Final Thoughts

The power of self-talk is clear. If you were to take a moment to tap into your thoughts right now, which way would they sway? Do you tend to think more positive thoughts or negative ones? Do you find yourself talking down or talking yourself up?

If you're a negative self-talker, all hope is not lost. It's possible to reframe your thoughts and adopt a positive mindset and positive self-talk. The techniques we provided you with above are a great place to start. To change your self-talk, though, you will need to commit to consistency.

The key to establishing new habits is consistency. Practice the techniques above regularly and dedicate yourself to become a positive self-talker. It might not happen overnight, but you will soon see a change in your self-talk as you embark on a journey of improvement.

Remember this, you are valuable, you are worthy, and you deserve all the happiness and success this world has to offer. All you have to do is believe it and go out there and grab happiness and success for yourself.