

Understanding OUR Self-talk

NDSU EXTENSION

EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE >> CHANGING LIVES

**Talk to yourself like you would
to someone you love.**

– Brene Brown

Recognizing Self-talk

Examples of *negative* self-talk

I've never done it before.
It's too complicated.
I don't have the resources.
I'm too lazy to get this done.
There's no way it will work.
It's too radical a change.
No one bothers to communicate with me.
I'm not going to get any better at this.

Examples of *positive* self-talk

It's an opportunity to learn something new.
I'll tackle it from a different angle.
Necessity is the mother of invention.
I wasn't able to fit it into my schedule but
I can re-examine some priorities.
I can try to make it work.
Let's take a chance.
I'll see if I can open the channels
of communication.
I'll give it another try.

Believeinrecovery.com

Defining Self-talk

Self-talk is the internal narrative (inner voice) you hold about yourself. It can range from giving ourselves instructions while we carry out a task to random observations about our environment or situation.

www.positivepsychology.com/positive-self-talk

Anytime you think about something, you are in a sense talking to yourself. (Bunker et al. 1993)

Self-talk can be manifested in verbal or nonverbal ways, in the form of a word, a thought, a smile, a frown, etc. (Chroni, 1997)

We have 60,000 thoughts (self-talk) a day.
www.thinkingup.org

**The things we
think about, focus
on and surround
ourselves with will
ultimately shape who
we become.**

– www.livelifehappy.com

**Watch what
you tell
yourself;
you're likely
to believe it.**

– Russ Kyle

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Negative Self-talk

What it is and How it Can Affect Us

Negative self-talk doesn't just stay in your mind, it often leads to actions you might sometimes regret. It might encourage you to "tell that other person off" or "refuse to be taken advantage of" or "quit this stupid job," or it might lead to a destructive relationship, a breakdown in family relations or isolating yourself from a long-term friend or relative because it helps you justify that this is the right thing to do.

Beverly D. Flaxington, The Destructive Nature of Negative Self-Talk
www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/understand-other-people/202002/the-destructive-nature-negative-self-talk

Five Ways We Justify Negative Self-talk and Why They're Wrong by Guy Winch

1. I'm just being honest with myself.
2. It will prevent me from having an inflated ego.
3. It will prepare me for future disappointment or hurt.
4. It's an accurate reflection of who I am as a person.
5. I deserve it.

www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-squeaky-wheel/201906/5-ways-we-justify-negative-self-talk-and-why-they-re-wrong

Recognizing Negative Self-talk

Negative self-talk tends to fall into one of four categories:

1. Personalizing – meaning you blame yourself when things go wrong
2. Polarizing – meaning you see things only as good or bad, no gray areas or room for middle ground
3. Magnifying – meaning you only focus on the bad or negative in every scenario and dismiss anything good or positive
4. Catastrophizing – meaning you always expect the worst

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Positive Self-talk

What it is and How it Can Affect Us

Positive self-talk is about showing yourself some self-compassion and understanding for who you are and what you've been through. (Jantz, 2019)

Positive self-talk sees our internal narrative switching to ideas such as "I can do better next time" or "I choose to learn from my mistakes, not be held back by them." Positivepsychology.com/positive-self-talk

Positive self-talk is important for a number of reasons. From helping overcome body dysmorphia to improving sports performance, mediating anxiety and depression, helping boost confidence and resilience, helping build better relationships to more effective learning, positive self-talk can make a world of difference. Positivepsychology.com/positive-self-talk

Positive self-talk isn't about knowing all the answers or thinking you're amazing, it's simply about reframing how you view things, removing negative bias and approaching life with the idea that you can tackle things – and even if it doesn't go perfectly – you'll learn from it next time.

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10 Examples of Positive Self-talk Statements and Phrases

1. I have the power to change my mind.
2. Attempting to do this took courage and I am proud of myself for trying.
3. Even though it wasn't the outcome I hoped for, I learned a lot about myself.
4. I might still have a ways to go, but I am proud of how far I have already come.
5. I am capable and strong; I can get through this.
6. Tomorrow is a chance to try again, with the lessons learned from today.
7. I will give it my all to make this work.
8. I can't control what other people think, say or do. I can only control me.
9. This is an opportunity for me to try something new.
10. I can learn from this situation and grow as a person.

Positivepsychology.com/positive-self-talk

12 Simple Ways to Stay Positive and Happy

You can't control what happens to you, but one thing you can control is how you respond. It's up to you to look for the right side in everything and react most positively.

1. Always be grateful
2. Create a positive environment
3. Exercise more
4. Treasure your experience more than possessions
5. Help others
6. Go outdoors
7. Try meditation
8. Get enough sleep
9. Express your feelings
10. Reduce your worries
11. Accept and find solutions
12. Make an effort to find a positive side in everything

www.thriveglobal.com/stories/12-simple-ways-to-stay-positive-and-happy