



## BECOME AWARE OF SELF-TALK

Self-talk is a crucial part of physical, mental and emotional self-care. The way you talk to yourself can positively or negatively impact your emotional state, relationships, productivity at work or school, and physical health.

### We All Talk To Ourselves

Our self-talk makes an impression on our subconscious mind and our emotions. The words we use to communicate with ourselves can uplift or depress our emotional and mental states. The words you choose during self-talk can instantly change any emotional experience. The words we attach to our experiences, become our experiences. Words shape our perceptions and impact our actions. We need to consciously identify negative, disempowering words we use during self-talk and replace them with uplifting, empowering words. Not only can you change your own emotional and mental state with the words you choose, but you can also enhance the quality of interactions you have with others.

### How Do You Talk To Yourself?

Have you ever stopped to think about the things you say to yourself? Let's do that now. This self-discovery exercise will help you become more aware of how you talk to yourself. Stop and think about each situation before responding. For each of the following situations, write what you would typically say to yourself:

1. You are ready to leave the house for the day and look in the mirror one last time.
2. You receive a message from your boss, saying that they would like to talk to you today.
3. Someone at the grocery store, who you don't know, keeps looking over at you.
4. A friend tells you they think you are a good person.

5. A careless driver runs a stop sign and almost hits you. You react quickly and prevent an accident.
6. You are in a rush and don't look both ways before pulling out onto a busy street. You almost get hit.
7. You make up a new recipe and it turns out delicious.
8. You make up a new recipe and it is disgusting. You throw it away and everyone eats sandwiches for dinner.

Go back through these statements. What would you say in each situation, if it was someone you cared about like a family member or a friend, instead of yourself? Would you talk differently to that person as compared to how you talk to yourself?

9. Did you answer YES? What is the difference between how you talk to people you care about and how you talk to yourself?
10. If you were your own friend, would you want to stay friends with yourself based on how you talk to yourself?

Honestly, you should be your friend. You should treat yourself as good as you would treat a loved one. You should talk as kind to yourself as you do to others. If you find that you have common mean and demeaning things you say to yourself, then check out the handout *Derail Negative Thinking*. This handout has some practical ideas to help you combat negative self-talk.

### **Positive Empowering Words**

The words we use in our thoughts and speech produce biochemical effects. Powerful words produce powerful biochemical effects, and evoke meaningful images and emotional responses. These associated images and emotions can be positive and empowering or negative and destructive. It is so important that we choose positive, empowering words when communicating with ourselves, about ourselves, about our situations and about others.

Take a look at the following lists of positive empowering words. Try incorporating a few of them into your vocabulary on a regular basis.

adored  
amazing  
awesome  
brilliant

energized  
extraordinary  
explosive  
empowered

passionate  
phenomenal  
precious  
relish

beautiful	fascinating	remarkable
blessed	fantastic	resilient
captivating	fabulous	sensational
confident	gifted	smart
charmed	gorgeous	super
creative	hurray	special
dynamite	invincible	smashing
excited ecstatic	incredible	spectacular
excellent	intelligent	tremendous
exuberant	jazzed	terrific
exhilarated	magnificent	unique
enthralled	marvelous	vivacious
enraptured	outstanding	vibrant
	outrageous	winner

### Positive Self-Talk Exercise:

Choose 3 positive empowering words from the lists above. Write an uplifting or kind message to yourself, for each word.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Neutralizing Words

Words can neutralize negative situations. Instead of saying that you are angry, you could say you're disenchanted. Maybe you're energized instead of nervous. Being misunderstood is much less hurtful than being rejected. Here are some other examples of neutralizing words:

Negative Word	Neutralizing Word
Irritated	Stimulated
Overwhelmed	Challenged
Lost	Searching
Lazy	Storing energy
Anxious	Expectant
Disgusted	Surprised
Failure	Leaning
Embarrassed	Receiving attention
Impatient	Anticipating
Insecure	Questioning
Exhausted	Recharging
Pissed off	Passionate
Insulted	Misinterpreted
Rejected	Unappreciated

Positive Self-Talk Exercise:

Write down 3 negative words that you use on a regular basis to talk to yourself. Next, think of and write a neutral word next to each negative.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

The good news is that by thinking differently about yourself and your experiences, you can change the conversation inside your head from negative to positive. This shift in perspective will help improve all areas of your life. You'll become happier. Your confidence will increase. You'll better understand yourself, to make improved decisions. Most importantly, your mental – emotional – physical health will be positively impacted.