

When you quiet the negative self-talk going on in your mind; the judgements, the why-me's?



the horribilizing (thinking what if the most negative outcome occurs?) you begin to move towards more positive thinking which can bring more clarity, health and overall well-being. Sometimes it is easier to start giving yourself more positive self-talk to crowd out all the negative, cluttery thoughts. Soon the positive self talk shines brighter than any of the clouds of negative self talk. But how do you make the switch from too much negative self-talk to reasonable self-talk or even positive self-talk; quieting the negative and cultivating the positive?? There are lots of ways to do it.. I'll share a few here that have been a great help to many people.

Recently I did a presentation for NAMI - National Alliance on Mental Illness of Brown County, WI titled Positive Self-talk and How To Do It More. It was so well received that I've decided to share the key points (below the presentation in-lay with links and details) and the presentation.

First let's define Reality, negative self talk and positive self talk. Let's take the example of running. Some people like to run but most people have to "warm up" to running.

If you define reality, you would say I am running. If you ended up in some negative self-talk about it, you might be thinking something like; I hate to run. I'll never run as far as I should. I can't do this. The negative self-talk is directly contrary to what your body is actually doing, create's an inner conflict or struggle and will weaken your body's ability to accomplish your run. Positive self-talk during a run might sound something like this; Running is good for me. I am strong when I run. I like what running does to my body. If you can't get to a positive thought just stay with stating reality, this is congruent with what your body is doing which keeps it strong; in this example it would be: I am running. The different messages you send to yourself make a difference in how your body responds; as in which neurotransmitters are sent out to your body and cause either a relaxed or stressed and anxious response. If you send negative messages to yourself while running you will feel anxious, which will make you weaker and less capable and want to quit. And running is only an example; self talk works this way in whatever endeavor you are participating in.

Now that we have a sense of what positive talk can sound like and how to get there, here are three ways you can start to improve your personal positive self-talk today.

1) Use even though statements. I like even though statements, they are commonly used in an integrative healthcare technique called EFT. Even though statements validate your problem or feelings but also give you a way out of them. Validating the problem can be very helpful sometimes since when you pretend that the problem isn't there and declare an affirmation as if in defiance of the problem you can create an internal conflict, these internal conflicts can become exhausting; causing you to repress the problematic feelings until you can

no longer repress them and they take you over. Here is an example of an even though statement: Even though I feel frustrated, I am open to the possibility a solution will come to me. Even though I feel angry now, I am open to the possibility that I can calm down. Even though nothing is making sense, I am open to the possibility that things will make more sense later.

Basically you can use this sentence structure to begin with: Even though (state problem or problematic feeling),

I am open to the possibility I can

(state the feeling you will have when the problem has passed)

Just that little bit of openness to a change allows your infinitely creative mind to come up with new ways of addressing an old problem. You will likely need to run those Even though statements through your mind regularly to develop the new more positive way of addressing the old problem.

2) Keep a Gratitude Journal



When you keep a gratitude journal you develop a habit to look for positive things, people and experiences throughout the day. At first it can be a little challenging if you are used to seeing all the negative things but as you journal at night about 10 things you are grateful for you will find a new habit of seeking the positive springing forth with very little effort. For the details on how to keep a gratitude journal and to download a [free gratitude journal click here](#)

3) Pre-sleep technique

As you fall asleep at night, repeat a positive statement or an even though statement 10 times so it is the last thought on your mind as you drift to sleep. The last thought you have on your mind is often what you will end up dreaming about, so let's make it a good thought! Use your fingers to count so you can be sure to say your positive statement at least 10 times. Use something like Every day in every way I'm feeling healthier and happier or Even though it was a tough day, I am open to feeling healthier and happier every day.

[Download the handout from the NAMI presentation](#)

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