

Positive Self-Talk = More Stamina and Enthusiasm

Who do you talk to the most every day? Your best friend? Your teacher? A parent? Wrong.

The person you talk to the most every day is *yourself*.

That’s right. What is playing on the podcast inside your head? On your internal “chat” with yourself? Is it positive or negative? Researchers who study human behavior have concluded that paying attention to what you say to yourself—and changing that message to one that is more encouraging, positive, and productive — can help you to avoid discouragement or depression and find the stamina and enthusiasm that you need to accomplish your goals.



Many teens are bombarded by disparaging messages from a variety of sources, by negative voices that write them off, disrespect their potential, and suggest that they will never amount to much. That is why it is essential that our self-talk and our mindsets be voices of truth that remind us that the sky’s the limit, because of our brain’s growth potential and because of the learning opportunities, strategies, supports, and wise counsel available to us when we confront challenges.

Think about your own self-talk. Does it reflect a hopeful, can-do mindset that encourages you to sustain prolonged effort to meet your goals? Do your beliefs and internal messages encourage you to embrace challenges and take strategic actions to make things better?

Positive self-talk means correcting the disparaging things you say to yourself or hear from others and replacing them with positive messages that highlight possibilities for change and improvement, rather than giving up hope. This is important! People that embrace an optimistic view -- a conviction that they are of value and importance and have a hope and a future -- get back on their feet and find a path forward when they get knocked down by negative events.

Read about a challenging event, disparaging self-talk, and positive self-talk in the chart below. Then think about how to apply positive self-talk to the other situations listed on the next page.

The Event	Disparaging Self-Talk	Positive Self-Talk
Joe doesn’t want to be my friend anymore	I’m unlovable.	I didn’t work hard enough at that relationship.
I failed the unit test in math.	I’m stupid. I always do badly in math.	I could have done better if I’d studied more and reached out for some tutoring. I’ll try both these things on the next unit.
I didn’t get the part I wanted in the school play.	I don’t get big parts because I have no talent. And, the director hates me.	I’ll ask the director about tips on what to work on and on an acting coach, class, or summer program to help me improve.