



12 QUICK FIXES FOR NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Build a better you!

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Intro

There will always be conversations within our own minds that dictate our words, our actions, and how we perceive the world. Our thoughts, the things we tell ourselves, have the power to raise us to the greatest heights, and likewise, plummet us to the deepest depths. In fact, it can be argued there is nothing so telling regarding our success as our own self-talk and whether or not the things we tell ourselves are positive or negative.

This alone is why it is so incredibly important to eradicate negative self-talk from your mind.

You would think this would be an easy task. One has only to think positively to effect the desired change, right?

Sadly, this isn't quite the case. While an awareness of the words you use can make things better for a time, it's truly our habits which define us. If you are customarily talking to yourself in negative ways, then chances are you've fallen under the spell of habits that need to change, now, before your life can improve.

Thankfully there's hope. You really don't have to live like this. Let's look at these habits and talk about ways in which you can eradicate them, thus freeing you to the life you're meant to live.

Habit #1: “I’m Fine”

If you’re like most people, you don’t even want to admit to negative self-talk in front of anyone else. To do so feels vulnerable. Not everyone is ready to admit things aren’t all rosy in their world.

The Fix: Realize it’s normal to be negative sometimes. Everyone feels this way on occasion. Denying it only gives it more power over you and locks you into the negative cycle. You can’t fix what you don’t know is broken.

Habit #2: “It’s Not My Fault”

We’re quick to assign blame elsewhere when things don’t go right. This kind of negative self-talk keeps us from seeing the truth and keeps you stuck right where you are. You’re never going to make any kind of forward progress with this kind of attitude.

The Fix: Focus on what you’re doing right, and don’t be afraid to admit where you went wrong. Accepting the blame allows you to accept your role in the outcome and learn from it.

Habit #3: “It’s Not Going to Work Anyway”

If you’re positive something isn’t going to work out, chances are it won’t. We have a way of self-sabotaging ourselves whether we realize it or not.

The Fix: It’s ok to ask yourself what can go wrong when planning out a project if you intend to have a standby solution. But at some point, you need to let go of the worry and fear. You’re only distracting yourself. Remind yourself that you have every likelihood of succeeding.

Habit #4: “No One Will Like It”

Not everyone is going to be on board with what you’re doing but telling yourself the audience is watching and are going to hate you would give anyone stage fright. This need for outside approval is intensely damaging and will hold you back every time.

The Fix: Why are you worrying about everyone else’s opinion? The only person you need to satisfy is yourself. Keep your focus on doing your best. Forget what the rest of the world thinks.

Habit #5: “What if I’m Wrong?”

When you second-guess yourself all the time, it’s impossible ever to feel fully satisfied with your choices. This uneasiness will plague you in everything you do.

The Fix: Slow down your decision-making process. It might be you’re acting impulsively and discovering to your chagrin that you hadn’t thought through the consequences, hence your constant second-guessing. By becoming more mindful in your choices, you’ll feel more confident in your decisions and won’t question yourself quite so much.

Habit #6: “I’m Happier Alone”

The idea that we’re ok alone is easily justified. After all, some people are introverts by nature. But even introverts occasionally need the company of other people, especially if they’ve been spending a lot of time alone with their thoughts. Without anyone else to provide input, your internal dialogue can become negative rapidly.

The Fix: This is why it’s good to get out once in a while, even if we think we’re happier alone. Keep track of your time. When is the last time you went out anywhere? Who have you talked to lately? It might be time to reach out.

Habit #7: “I Don’t Have Time for _____”

It’s so easy to get so focused on the big-picture goal that we sometimes forget even the basics of self-care. Not taking time for sleep or exercise can lead to long-lasting effects on your health, leaving you feeling dragged out and even sick. What’s worse is when you neglect your mental health, never giving yourself time off to just rest or even play. These decisions might seem like time-savers in the short term, but will affect creativity and mood very quickly, leading you very easily down into a negative spiral of poor self-talk and feelings of depression and anxiety.

The Fix: Make sure you get adequate sleep. Exercise regularly. Schedule time with friends or to do the activities you enjoy most. When you feel push back, remind yourself *you* are important too, and that it’s ok to take a break.

Habit #8: “I Can Just Skip Lunch”

This ties into the one above. Not eating or eating poorly leads to chemical imbalances, which can affect your mood and can even alter your thinking processes. It’s hard to maintain any kind of positive self-talk when your blood sugar is low, or you’re feeling sick and bloated from something you ate.

The Fix: Don’t skip meals. Make sure you’re eating a balanced diet that works for you to maintain peak body health.

Habit #9: “My Friends Said it was a Bad Idea.”

Why are you listening to someone else? When you’re around negative people, negativity has a way of rubbing off. The more they gripe, the more you’ll find yourself caught up in your own internal rant. This isn’t healthy for anyone.

The Fix: It might be time to take a step back from the negative influences in your life. While it might not always be possible to remove someone from your circle of acquaintances entirely, you can put limits on how much time you spend with

them. If the conversation starts getting too negative, set boundaries. Let them know you'd rather change the subject. If they still insist? It might be time to call it a night.

Habit #10: "It's Not Like I'm Any Good at it, Anyway."

We're really good at putting ourselves down. When we're lacking confidence in an area, it's normal to want to hold back and not try. By convincing yourself you can't before you begin, you make it easy to quit before you theoretically make a fool of yourself.

The Fix: Remind yourself of the things you are good at. Tell yourself there's a chance you might succeed. Allow yourself to find out. Be okay with failing. If you do, you're still guaranteed to learn something new. Besides, how many people succeed on the first try?

Habit #11: "I Don't Have a Problem."

Denial is one of the worst types of self-talk. We can truly convince ourselves of just about anything when we put our minds to it. Why then is this such a favorite go-to? Most of the time, it's because there's just too much work involved in fixing the problem once you admit it's there.

The Fix: A lot of the time, ignoring the problem leads to resentment. Ask yourself just who or what you're resentful about right now. If you're still not sure this is a problem, try looking at things as an outsider would. What would they say to you? Have you already had people saying this very thing to you? Once you start recognizing the situation for what it is, make an action plan. What's something positive you can do to correct things?

Habit #12: “I Don’t Need Help.”

Sometimes the negative self-talk can take over your life. This leads to depression, anxiety, and the worry that no matter what you do, things will never be any better.

The Fix: When this happens, it’s time to consider reaching out to someone else. Start with your doctor, as frequently negative feelings stem from physical ailments. If this is not the case, you might want to consider seeing a counselor. There’s nothing wrong with seeking help when you need it.

Conclusion

Negative self-talk will hold you back in every aspect of your life, from your career aspirations all the way on down to the relationships with those you love the most. This is why building new habits is so important. There is no quick fix here; what works today must be reinforced over and over again, until the habit of positive self-talk becomes a way of life. It will happen.

Never doubt for a minute just how worthy this particular goal is. Your positivity is what's going to enable you to realize your dreams. You're going to feel happier, and your relationships will feel more meaningful. You'll connect more deeply with the world around you and discover just how joyful life can be.

So, what are you waiting for? There's no time like the present, and you already have everything you need to succeed. There is no better time to embrace the new, more positive you!