

Chapter 3 Lesson 1: Developing Your Self-Esteem

Introduction:

As you learned in this lesson, “self-talk” is the stream of messages—positive and negative—that we send ourselves throughout the day. At some time of another, most of us engage in negative self-talk, which can harm both our self-esteem and our outlook on life. Fortunately, since self-talk occurs between our own ears, we have the power to change it. At this Web site, you can learn more about how you can bring yourself down with self-talk, as well as how you can turn your internal dialogue around for the better.

Links to Explore:

Self Talk

<http://healthyhabits.com/SelfTalk.asp>

Directions:

- Click on the link and read the article.
 - Then answer the following questions:
1. What is the relationship between your self-talk and your state of mind?
 2. List five forms of negative self-talk.
 3. What is catastrophizing?
 4. How can you break the habit of negative self-talk?
 5. What is the purpose of positive affirmations?
 6. When stating affirmations, is it better to frame them in the negative (“I am not stupid”) or in the positive (“I am smart”)? Explain why.

Answers:

1. Self-talk reflects your emotional state—positive or negative—and can also change your state of mind for better or worse.
2. Any five of the following:
 - Focusing only on problems
 - Catastrophizing
 - Expecting the worst
 - Stereotyping
 - Shoulds
 - Thinking in absolutes
 - All or nothing thinking
 - Negative labels
 - Blaming
 - "Yes but..." arguments
 - Overgeneralizing
3. Catastrophizing is treating every bad thing that happens as a horrible disaster.

4. Whenever you catch yourself in negative self-talk, take a break to interrupt the negative train of thought. Then write down some of your negative thoughts and try to evaluate them realistically. Finally, replace each negative thought you've written with a realistic, positive statement. Get in the habit of doing this regularly and you will soon be interrupting negative self-talk in mid-sentence.
5. By describing yourself as you want to be, you can harness the power of positive thinking to make this image a reality.
6. Framing affirmations positively is better because it focuses on the behavior you want to encourage, rather than the one you want to avoid.

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Improving Self-Esteem

<http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc/booklets/selfesteem/selfest.html>

National Association for Self-Esteem

<http://www.self-esteem-nase.org/>