

Be Your Own Best Coach!

Talk to Yourself As You Would Your Best Friend

This technique can increase the ability to respond positively more often, when presented with negative or challenging situations.

Types of Positive Self-Talk

- **Motivational self-talk**

What we say to “psych” ourselves up

Example: “You can!”, “Come on!” “Let’s go!”

- **Instructional Self-Talk**

What we say to ourselves when learning or practicing a task or something new

Example: “talk slowly”, “tell the patient what you are doing first”

Talk yourself through individual steps if it’s a complex task, like athletes do

Example: “First do _____, then do _____”

- **Positive Feedback Self-Talk**

What we say after we’ve done something (bad or good)

Example: “Good job!” “You did it!”

If something didn’t go well, focus on what you did right or what you learned

Example: “Whew, that was hard, I learned....” or “Next time I will ...”

Tips for Creating Positive Messages to Yourself

- **The words you use matter**

When people speak to themselves, as another person, using their own name or the pronoun “you”, it encourages them to give more objective, helpful feedback.

Example: instead of saying: “I can do this” Say, “__ *your name* __, you can do this!”

- **Use short, specific words and be consistent**

Your brain remembers best when you use short phrases, repeatedly

Example: “You are calm” “__ *your name* __, breathe slowly!”

- **Observe without judgment**

Try to observe your thoughts, without reaction or judgment.

Example: “__ *your name* __, you seem to be getting worked up over this. Interesting.”

References:

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2. Kross, S et. al, (2014) Self-Talk as a Regulatory Mechanism: How You Do It Matters. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 2014, Vol. 106, No. 2, 304–324 © 2014 American Psychological Association
3. Zourbanos, N., Hatzigeorgiadis, A., Chroni, S., Theodorakis, Y., & Papaioannou, A. (2009). Automatic Self-Talk Questionnaire for Sports (ASTQS): Development and preliminary validation of a measure identifying the structure of athletes' self-talk. The Sport Psychologist, 23, 233-251