3 STEPS TO INNER PEACE AND POWER

HOW TO TRANSFORM YOUR NEGATIVE SELF-TALK INTO AN EMPOWERING INNER VOICE

3 STEPS TO INNER PEACE & POWER

Transform Your Negative Self-Talk Into
An Empowering Inner Voice, *Without*
Struggling To Change What It Says

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Introduction

One day I was picking my nephews up from preschool. I passed one of the rooms where I saw a little girl putting a puzzle together on the floor. She was talking out loud, even though there was no one else in the room with her:

"That piece should be there," she said. And when it didn't fit:

"No, that's not right… Try again."

In another room, my nephew was putting together a toy train track:

"The curve goes here. We need to close it up. Oh, we need another piece. Put a switch there."

Notice how both kids were talking *to themselves:*

Famous Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky discovered that we begin talking to ourselves like this from a very early age, starting in our toddler years – typically around the age of three. [1]

He observed children as they played, and noticed they gave themselves instructions – most notably while engaged in challenging tasks. According to Vygotsky, there was an important purpose to this kind of *self-talk:*

It helped the kids steer their behavior and organize their thoughts.

Now as youngsters, the conversations we have with ourselves are clearly identifiable and often actually spoken out loud. But starting at the age of seven, they become more *internalized* and *automatic*, and can ultimately persist as lifelong mental companions.

At some point, our self-talk becomes so persistent, that we actually consider it *thought itself* [2]. And from there, it can affect you in two ways:

1. On the bright side, it can become one of the most effective, least utilized tools available to master your psyche and boost your happiness, personal performance and success.

2. But on the flipside, it can also become severely debilitating, and sometimes even turn into an actually *damaging* source of anxiety, depression and painful overthinking – where the opinions of others, the stresses and strains of daily life, gossip, hearsay, prejudice, fear and bias keep bouncing around in your mind like a pinball machine on tilt, only to kill your joy and general outlook on life.

In fact:

If you're like most people, you're all too familiar with the latter – negative chatter running in your head that keeps repeating your shortcomings, until you know all the things that are supposedly wrong with you and your life backwards, forwards, and upside down.

Quick Check-In On Your Own Inner Voice:

Think about the nature of your own inner voice for a moment. For instance, consider a situation where you failed or fell short on something:

- ✓ Did it transform into a merciless critic that only seemed to blame and talk you down? *(<-- "I can't do anything right!" "I'm so lame!" "What a screw-up!" "How can I ever show my face in public again?")*
- ✓ Or did it express itself in a more compassionate fashion? *(<-- "It's okay, you did the best you could." "No worries, you'll do better next time.")*

If you're like most people, it's your yapping inner critic that usually prevails…

Fortunately, there's a simple way to overcome this kind of inner turmoil. But the problem is:

- Most of the instructions floating around on the topic are either *dead wrong*, *woefully incomplete*, or *overly convoluted*, and they often actually end up only making things *worse*. *In fact:*
- As you might have discovered yourself, there's a little more to it than a mere decision to be more optimistic, or trying to drill in new beliefs by force-feeding your mind positive self-statements. *Indeed, to give you a hint:*
- It's not so much a matter of *what* you think, but rather of *how* you think.

And that's exactly what this guide will show you how to do:

Three simple steps can *totally* shift your self-talk, without even having to specifically try and change what it says. And as weird as that may sound, that makes transforming your inner voice much more straightforward than the dead-end loops most self-help clichés tend to get you stuck in.

Best of all – you can begin to put this to work for you starting today.

So if you're ready for a radical self-talk shift of your own, then let's dig in…

Chapter 1:
You ARE Talking To Yourself

Let's face it:

You *are* in fact talking to yourself. Whether you realize it or not, self-talk is ubiquitous – each and every one of us has an internal dialogue that we regularly engage in.

According to sports psychologist Antonis Hatzigeorgiadis, there are three core reasons we talk to ourselves: [4]

1. **To instruct:**
   Instructional self-talk happens when we need to guide ourselves through a specific task, such as learning a new skill.

2. **To motivate:**
   Motivational self-talk can help boost our efforts and increase our confidence when we want to mentally pump ourselves up for something challenging.

3. **To evaluate:**
   Evaluative self-talk has to do with our opinions about ourselves and our behavior in relation to past events and/or actions.

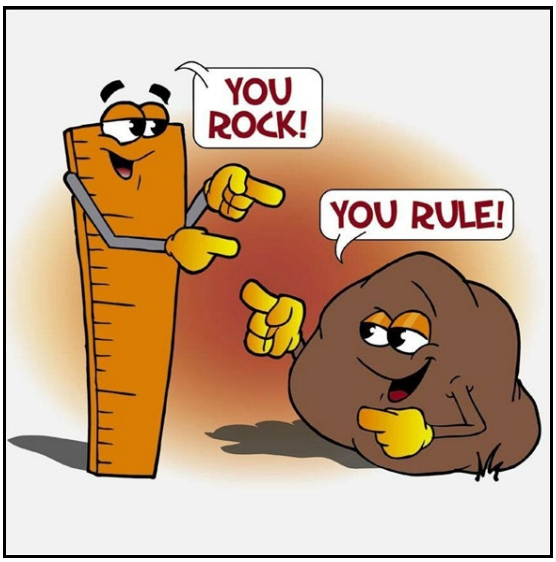
Scientists who dedicate their work to studying the inner voice typically presume it first takes shape during early childhood. From there, it gradually captures a certain nature and tone as it evolves over time. [5, 6]

Pinpointing exactly *what* shaped the nature of your inner voice – and *when* that happened – isn't always an easy thing to do.

Some psychologists think your inner voice is mostly an echo of the voice of your parents or care-takers. From their point of view…:

- If they used to talk to you in a *strict*, *disapproving*, and/or *condescending* way, then it's likely that your inner voice reflects that tone. *On the other hand:*

- If you mainly heard *acknowledgment*, *compliments* and *praise*, then the tone of your inner voice will generally be more positive. *(<-- Unless the praise was excessive, which can actually have the opposite effect.)*



But it's not just your parents or caretakers who impact the nature of your inner voice. Research shows that other people who play(ed) an important role in your life make an impression as well, like teachers and peers. For example: [7]

Kids who generally found themselves around kind and constructive conversations usually experience more *positive* self-talk, even if the praise they heard *wasn't* specifically addressed to *them*. *(<-- "Well done, everybody!")*

However, like most people, you've probably been around people and conditions that (sub-) communicated powerful *negative* and *disapproving* messages, which made you pick up on things that were supposedly wrong, undesirable, or even objectionable about you.

For instance:

- Your family may have made you out to be the black sheep or the scapegoat.

- Your teachers may have criticized you over and over.

- Whole classrooms full of peers may have mocked you for being different.

- Etc.

Over time, your own mind may have taken over all those degradations and denunciations, put them on repeat, and turned them into dismal mantras that just keep stressing all the things that are supposedly wrong with you.

Little by little thoughts like these get etched in your brain as actual neural pathways. That's why you may now feel like you're stuck in a rut, literally – as if the record played in your mind is caught up in the same old annoying groove.

And from there, even when you *do* receive some form of recognition or praise, it won't even register – simply because your mind is so fixated somewhere else.

We'll go deeper into why and how that happens in the complimentary follow-up training series I'll send you after you finish reading this guide *(<-- more details at the end of this manual)*.

Once you discover the real reason behind your negative self-talk, you'll understand why most popular approaches to change your self-talk don't work the way it seems they should.

Instead, you'll learn how you can finally eliminate what's lying at the *root* of it, so you can clear away its very reason to exist, and as such free yourself of its crippling impact forever.

Regardless of what it was that shaped the nature of your self-talk, science *has* indeed shown its measurable impact on your frame of mind, mood and performance. However, that influence is often *not* what it's made out to be.

So to distinguish fact from fiction so you can stop wasting time on techniques that don't work, let's examine the evidence…

Chapter 2:
How You 'Walk' Your Self-Talk

Compare your inner voice to that of a sportscaster, who's permanently watching you from the sidelines of your life, and is always there to comment. *For example:*

- You could be working on an important task at your job… *(<-- "Better not look bad on this one…")*
- You could be trying on some new swimwear in the fitting room… *(<-- "Gosh, I got fat – look at those rolls…")*
- You could be having trouble getting out of bed in the morning to get started on your ginormous to-do list… *(<-- "Good grief, I'm such a lazy bastard…")*

Whatever situation you're in, the voice is always there. And research shows that its tone and content can indeed make a big difference in your frame of mind, mood and performance. For example: [8, 9]

How Your Self-Talk Impacts Your Mood & Mind Frame:

There's a clear association between *discouraging* self-talk and *gloomy* or even *destructive* emotional states. For instance:

- People who tend towards *perfectionism* and those who often feel *depressed* or *anxious* typically experience a lot of *discouraging* self-talk. *And what's more:*
- *Reducing* that type of destructive and anxious self-talk does indeed diminish their anxiety levels.

A similar association was found in relation to performance and success…

How Your Self-Talk Impacts Your Performance & Success:

The nature of your self-talk also affects your ability to perform and succeed in life. For example:

1. **Research clarifies how self-talk impacts *sports* performance:**

   Much of the existing research into the effects of our inner voice has been focused on *athletes*, for two main reasons:

   - ✓ Athletes often get exposed to high-pressure situations that *trigger* intense self-talk. And what's more:
   - ✓ The *nature* of that self-talk can also *directly impact the outcome* of the situation they find themselves in, which makes its immediate effects easier to measure.

   One study was designed to get an idea of what happens in the mind of an athlete at moments of *failure*. In this particular study, researchers had elite cricket players watch video footage of themselves in matches they played, and froze the image right the instant they could see themselves miss a hit. [10]

In that exact moment they asked the players what they were (mentally) saying to themselves:

- ✓ Some of them turned out to *motivate* themselves *(<-- "Hang in there!" and "Stay cool!")*, or *give themselves instructions (<-- "Watch the ball!")*.

- ✓ Others rather *swore* and *lashed out* at themselves. *(<-- Not worth repeating that language here.)*

In a bigger meta-analysis of a whole range of studies, British sports psychologists found that a motivating and encouraging inner voice does indeed *diminish anxiety* and lead to *deeper focus* and *better performance*. For example:

- ✓ Athletes turned out to *jump higher*, *throw more accurately* at darts, and *cycle faster.* [8]

  Strikingly though, there was no conclusive evidence for the supposed *adverse* effects of *negative* self-talk on sports performance. In other words:

- ✓ While *positive* self-talk did *improve* performance for athletes, *negative* self-talk did *not* necessarily *diminish* it – possibly because some athletes actually derived motivation from it. *(<-- "Get up and move on, you wimp!")*

Nevertheless, the destructive impact of negative self-talk <u>did</u> show in another context…

2. Research shows how self-talk impacts <u>*work*</u> performance:

In one study, American researcher Steven Rogelberg and his colleagues had corporate executives write future-oriented letters to themselves about their own functioning.

Next, they examined the letters to see how constructive or dysfunctional their self-criticism was. For example: [11]

- ✓ One executive <u>*encouraged*</u> himself like this:

  "You are good at what you do, so you are going to start giving yourself some credit… publicly. And the next time someone compliments you on something, do not brush them off before they finish with a quick 'thank you' – take it all in."

- ✓ Conversely, one of the other leaders rather <u>*disapproved*</u> of himself:

  "And how's the mess at the office? Still cancelling appointments or showing up in wrong meetings? Hope you can handle your schedule a little better now. Say no to some stuff. Otherwise one day you're going to be the only one in the meetings. Don't say I didn't tell you."

Notice the difference in tone:

The first one is clearly much more constructive, while the negative tone of the second one implies all manner of things that are wrong.

And *that* difference definitely showed in their personal and professional effectiveness:

- ✓ Both their subordinates and superiors evaluated leaders who addressed themselves in a positive way as *more effective* and displaying a *higher degree of creativity and originality*. And perhaps more importantly:

- ✓ The executives *themselves* experienced *less job strain and stress*.

So science agrees that a more constructive tone in your self-talk can make a significant difference in both your *well-being* and *performance* – which begs the question:

How do you get your inner voice to motivate, encourage and coach you – instead of constantly finding fault and more reasons to be anxious, frustrated, or even depressed?

This is where we typically run into an awful lot of misinformation. So to answer that question, let's first get the things out of the way that certainly *don't* work, to clear the way for what *does*.

So here's what <u>not</u> to do…

Chapter 3:
What DOESN'T Work To Change Your Self-Talk?

To improve your self-talk – along with your overall frame of mind, mood and performance – popular self-help and success experts often recommend you repeat *positive affirmations*, such as:

- "I am loveable."
- "I am strong, powerful, nothing is stopping me."
- "I am so happy and grateful now that I'm rich."
- "I accept myself completely."
- *Etc.*

The idea is that if we repeat statements like these often enough, or write them on sticky notes and put them in places where we can see them all the time, we'll eventually begin to believe what they say.

So does that actually work?

Canadian researchers decided to put this notion to the test. They let their subjects repeat the popular affirmation *"I am loveable,"* and the results were striking: [12]

- *Only* the people who'd *already feel good about themselves* would actually feel better from speaking out that affirmation. *On the contrary:*

- Those who *didn't* already have a solid degree of self-confidence – in other words, the very folks who *needed* the intended boost the most – experienced the very *opposite* effect: *they would actually feel worse about themselves.*

The researchers explained this counter-intuitive effect based on the idea that positive affirmations simply *aren't believable* for people who don't think much of themselves to begin with:

- When you feel inadequate in a particular area, a positive self-statement to the contrary emphasizes the difference between *who you are now* and *who you'd like to be* – which feels bad.

- As a result, trying to make yourself believe something that's a far cry from what you're really feeling is not only *ineffective*, but actually *detrimental*.

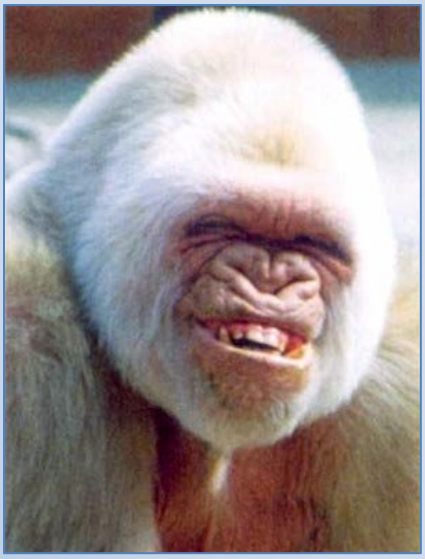
Unfortunately, as opposed to what many experts suggest, we can't simply deny, undo, or overcome that effect by mentally manufacturing some 'positive emotion' to augment the affirmation. Two reasons why:

- **For starters, you can't really zero in on an emotion you're not really feeling – especially if it's a sentiment you're not so familiar with, or have never actually felt.**

> As an illustration, suppose I ask you to imitate an animal you've never heard of, like the Grimpoteuthis. *(<-- If you happen to know all about this wonderful creature, just play along and pretend you don't…)*

Now to help you with your imitation, here's what I do:

- ✓ First I show you a picture of a monkey:



- ✓ Then I tell you that a monkey is *nothing* like a Grimpoteuthis.
- ✓ And finally, I ask you that you now do your best Grimpoteuthis imitation exclusively based on this information.

So go ahead – show me what you've got…

Not the easiest task, is it?

Here's my point:

Trying to manufacture an emotion you're not really feeling or are unfamiliar with is just as futile an attempt as trying to imitate a Grimpoteuthis based on the sole information that it's nothing like a monkey.

It's simply too far out for your mind to experience it as real, no matter how hard you try to imagine it.

But then you'll probably say:

"Well, that's the idea of an affirmation, right? You just keep repeating it, until your mind accepts it as truth…"

Unfortunately, that's usually not how it works – which is where that other reason comes in…

- **Secondly, ask yourself this question: "Who else but someone who's *not* already thinking or feeling a certain way would need to *convince* themselves that they *are*?"**

For instance:

- ✓ Who else but someone who's *not* happy would have to *convince* themselves they *are* in fact happy?

- ✓ Who else but someone who's *not* confident would have to *convince* themselves they *are* in fact confident?

- ✓ Who else but someone who believes they're *not* loveable would have to *convince* themselves they *are* in fact loveable?

My point is – there's a hidden truth *implied* in the very act of trying to *convince* yourself of feeling or believing something you're *not:*

- ✓ It says that you're *not* actually feeling and believing that way – without even needing to say it. *In other words:*

- ✓ By trying to affirm something you're not, you rather *awaken* and *accentuate* the very belief about yourself that you're trying to change – by means of which you inadvertently *reinforce* it, much like a covert affirmation to the contrary.

- ✓ And clearly, that's the very *opposite* of what you want.

We'll go deeper into why and how that happens in the complimentary follow-up training series I'll send you after you finish reading this guide *(<-- more details at the end)*.

Now of course, it's nice to know what certainly *doesn't work*. But that leaves the more important question – what *does* work to positively transform your self-talk?

So let's turn the page and find out…

Chapter 4:
What DOES Work To Change Your Self-Talk?

When we seek to transform negative self-talk into a more empowering inner voice, science has demonstrated two general strategies to be effective:

Please Note:

In this section we merely explore the larger conceptual strategies that have been proven to work, and the evidence that they do.

In the next section we'll translate these strategies into simple-to-use techniques you can begin to put to work today.

Strategy #1 – Gain Psychological Distance:

Research by psychologist Ethan Kross from the University of Michigan suggests that one important key is to learn how to *take some psychological distance* from yourself in challenging situations, which helps you prevent getting absorbed in the turbulence of your momentary emotions. [13]

By disidentifying from the inner commotion, you won't experience your feelings as intensely as you normally do, which helps you gain control of yourself, be more effective, and perform better as a result.

However, that's often easier said than done. Fortunately, there are simple techniques that help create that kind of psychological distance:

Aside from the ones I'll explain below, you'll learn another extremely effective technique in the complimentary follow-up training series I'll send you after you finish reading this guide *(<-- more details at the end of this manual)*.

What's more, that's where we'll also explore what lies at the root of your negative inner voice, so that you can eliminate it and free yourself of its debilitating impact forever. And that's what will *permanently* shift your self-talk.

For now, let's start with the fundamentals…

One effective means of *disidentification* that Kross discovered is a small change of wording in the positive things you want to say to yourself. For example:

- ✓ We're typically told to formulate our affirmations from an *associated*, *first person* perspective *(<-- i.e. "I am […]," or "I can do it")*. However, as corny as they may come to sound because of it…:

- ✓ You greatly increase your chances of eliciting the results you want when you talk to yourself from a *disidentified*, *second person* perspective – much like the way a friend would talk to you *(<-- so you'd use wordings like "<u>you are</u> […]," or "<u>you can do it</u>.")*.

Kross discovered this when he gave his test subjects five minutes to both *write* an important speech, as well as *mentally prepare* for it and *immediately deliver* it to a live audience afterwards:

- ✓ One group was instructed to use <u>*first person pronouns*</u> when they addressed themselves during their rehearsal *(<-- i.e. the associated "I"-form – as in: "I can do this.")*.

- ✓ Others were told to use their <u>*first name*</u> and <u>*second person pronouns*</u> instead *(<-- i.e. the disidentified "you"-perspective – as in: "You can do this.")*.

And the difference was notable:

- ✓ Those who used the "you"-perspective *performed much better* during the speech. *And as a bonus:*

- ✓ After delivering their speech, they also *didn't worry as much* about how good or bad they did.

Neuroscientist Jason Moser actually provided visual confirmation of this effect by measuring the brain's electrical response to these two self-talk perspectives.

When he tested the difference between using the "I"-form and the "you"-form, electrodes picked up the psychic improvement: [14]

- ✓ The electrical activity of the amygdala – the brain's seat of fear and frantic cries of emotion – *reduced by half*, indicating there was far less stress. And with that:

- ✓ The energy consumed by the cerebral cortex – the 'thinking' part of the brain that can kick into overdrive from painful rumination when the amygdala is overactive – declined correspondingly.

So here's what that all means:

- ✓ Gaining psychological distance by taking a cognitive *'step back'* to observe yourself from a mental distance diminishes the impact of negative self-talk. *And what's more:*

- ✓ It enables self-control, and allows you to minimize excessive mental stewing, think more clearly and perform more competently.

You've probably experienced this effect yourself:

Like most people, perhaps you've been able to clearly point out to *others* what's best for *them*, while having a much harder time doing the same for *yourself*.

That's how a less egocentric perspective diminishes negative emotions and self-talk, because it helps you to…:

- ✓ Let go of tunnel vision and limited perspectives.

- ✓ Focus more deeply.

- ✓ Plan constructively for the future.

But that's not all – here's the second proven strategy to enhance your self-talk …

Strategy #2 – Broaden Your Self-Concept:

When you seem to fall short in *one* area of your life, that sense of inadequacy can begin to dominate your *entire* self-concept. For example:

- ✓ You don't perform as well on a small task at work, and immediately think you can't do *anything* right in life *in general*.

- ✓ You experience a bit of a drop in flow in your once-a-week sports training or acting class, and next thing you know – you feel like a worthless sack of potatoes in *all areas of life*.

- ✓ You go through a temporary sales slump, and soon after feel like your *entire life* sucks – and you're you no fun to be around for other people as a result.

Fortunately, recent research from Cornell University offers a simple way to prevent this. Here's what happened in this study: [15]

- ✓ The researchers deliberately had students fail at some intellectual task.

- ✓ This obviously confronted them with an inability to perform and, as such, posed a direct threat to their sense of self-worth.

- ✓ But while one group of students was left to their own devices, they instructed another group to *purposely widen their view of themselves* by explicitly noting their value in *other* areas of life – besides just their role as a student.

Here's what happened:

- ✓ When the students intentionally restored a broader perspective of themselves, they negated the impact of their perceived failure considerably. *Indeed:*

- ✓ They were better able to realize that the failure merely pertained to only a *small fraction* of their identity, rather than their person as a whole.

- ✓ And as a result, they didn't get thrown off as much by their self-criticism as the other group did.

So that gives you a second simple approach to *instantly* restore your sense of self-worth, and cancel out any debilitating effects of negative self-talk that were triggered in the context of just *one* area:

You simply broaden your self-concept by thinking of all the *other roles and areas* that are *also* important to you.

Even affirmations can be effective to this end – provided that you use them the right way:

- ✓ As you've seen, it's of no use to apply affirmations in an attempt to seduce yourself into feeling great when you really don't – that won't happen no matter how many times you repeat them, or how much positive emotion you try to fabricate. *However:*

- ✓ Affirmations *can* work to your advantage if you use them to help *widen your view of yourself* – any time it gets too narrow and you find yourself stuck in the tunnel vision of dwelling on just *one* facet of your personality that's temporarily challenged in its worthiness.

Now here's the beauty in all this:

You may not fully see how yet, but these two strategies hold the keys for you to finally turn your inner voice from a grumpy old downer and bad-tempered criticaster into a supportive, encouraging and motivating *coach*.

So let's explore three simple-to-use tactics to make these insights work to your benefit and help you take full control of your mind starting today…

Chapter 5:
How To Take Back Control Of Your Mind

Three steps will do the trick:

Step #1 – Get to know your own inner voice.

In order to change anything in your self-talk, you first need to get a grip on it. For that, you need to become aware of *when* and *how* you're actually talking to yourself. So ask yourself – and preferably write down your answers:

1. *When* do you typically find yourself talking to yourself *(<-- out loud or internally)?*

2. *What* do you typically find yourself saying in those instances?

3. Are there any particular *situations* in which your inner voice is especially critical? *(<-- Perhaps in certain social situations, at work, when you're looking in the mirror, etc.)*

4. Does your inner voice remind you of *someone* who *is* or *used to be* close to you? If so, who in particular? *(<-- Pay special attention to the first person(s) that pop(s) into your mind when you ask yourself this question. Maybe it's a parent, a teacher, a boss, a sibling, a friend, etc.)*

5. If you had to address or refer to your inner voice, what would you call it? *(<-- For example, if you'd have to give it a name, nickname, or description, what would it be? Grumpy Griff? Complaining Karen? Your Honor? Gilbert Gottfried? Fran Drescher? Waldorf? Statler?)*

Just by making it more explicit, you'll be more acutely aware of when your inner critic begins to rear itself. And that alone can be enough to change its tone or even shut it up entirely – no further effort required.

But from here, we can take it up another notch…

Step #2 – Broaden your view of yourself.

As explained in the previous section, when your inner voice makes you feel like you're inadequate or falling short in *one* particular area of your life, it helps to deliberately expand your view of yourself by focusing on your *other* roles in life. So ask yourself:

1. Which of your roles do you find important in life? *(<-- For example: partner, parent, employee, volunteer, runner, friend, business owner, mime, etc.)*

2. And how important do you find them relative to each other? *(<-- Which are more important, and which are less essential?)*

Below are four easy ways to apply this notion to *instantly* prompt mental and emotional control. Pick your favorite, or use all of them:

Tactic #1 – The Humble Pie:

Create a pie chart that illustrates the relative importance of each of these roles in the grand scheme of your life. ***(<-- So when one role is more important to you than the other, it takes up a greater part of the pie.)***

Here's an example pie:

This gives you a simple supporting visualization that you can instantly pull up or call up in your mind whenever you need a reminder.

So next time you have a difficult moment in the context of *one* particular area of your life, pick up or recall your *Humble Pie* to instantly gain a broader view of your life as a whole.

This will swiftly nip the potential impact of negative self-talk in the bud, before it can do any damage to your overall sense of self-worth.

Tactic #2 – Past Praise Prospectus:

Any praise and supportive comments you've received in the past can serve as reminders of your true nature. So here's what you do:

✓ Make a list of people who nurture or have nurtured you by affirming your competency, potential and value. *Consider people like…:*

- Family…
- Friends…
- Relatives…
- Colleagues…
- Partners…
- Old flames…
- Clients…
- Teachers…

- Bosses…
- Customers…
- Competitors…
- Anyone else you can think of.

Next:

✓ Remember the positive words they said to you – compile and write (or type) up every compliment you've ever received from them and every single thing they ever said to you that made your heart lift a little. *Think in terms of different aspects of yourself, like your…:*

- Appearance…
- Intellectual abilities…
- Personality and who you are…
- Creativity…
- Skills and competence…
- Tenacity and grit…
- Potential to make your dreams come true…
- Anything else you can think of.

Then next time you have a difficult moment in the context of *one* particular area of your life, pick up this inventory of praise and supportive comments to gain a broader view of your value in a much larger context.

Again, this will swiftly nip the potential impact of negative self-talk in the bud, before it can do any damage to your overall sense of self-worth.

Tactic #3 – Past Success Synopsis:

Past accomplishments can also serve as reminders of your value and worth in the greater context of your life at large. Here's what you do:

✓ Make a list of every success or accomplishment you've ever had – no matter how small.

✓ To make the experience more explicit, jot down a few words that describe what happened. *(<-- You may need a buddy to help you remember the good times.)*

Then next time you have a difficult moment in the context of *one* particular area of your life, pick up this success inventory to gain a broader view of your actual worth in a much broader context.

Again, this will swiftly nip the potential impact of negative self-talk in the bud, before it can do any damage to your overall sense of self-worth.

Tactic #4 – Assets Outline:

A clear, unembarrassed view of your assets helps create a truly objective picture of your grander self. And by that, I don't (necessarily) mean your backside.

While at first it may seem hard to come by a clarification of the many things that are actually *right* with you, here are two simple ways to help you figure it out:

1. **Imagine you're someone else:**

   When you pretend you're someone else, you tap into a deeper source of knowledge and often discover things about yourself you didn't even know you knew.

   Basically, you take on someone else's point of view towards you, and then describe what you see. So to break it down…:

   - Put together your 'ideal family' by asking yourself:

     "If I could have anyone in all of history, literature, or film – real or fictional – as my ideal family, who would I choose?"

     We're looking to put together a group of the sort of people who cherish what's special about you, encourage you to explore and develop your talents and interests, and support you when times get tough.

     So make a list of all the people that come to mind.

     And from there…

   - Choose 4-5 other people you feel a special kinship with – for example:

     - People whose ideas or endeavors strongly appeal to you,
     - People whose life experience or temperament would make them empathetic towards you, or have a constructive *kick-in-the-rear-end*-effect on you.
     - People you just think are cool and would like to be in the company of.

     Write down their names, and leave some space underneath for the next bit…

   - Close your eyes and imagine that you're actually one of those people, and you're taking on their point of view to watch *yourself* come through the door.

     Now from the perspective of looking through *their* eyes, observe with curiosity, interest and fondness, and write down all the *positive things* you notice about…:

     - Your appearance…
     - Your body posture…
     - The way you move…
     - Your words, gestures and facial expressions…
     - The expressions on your face…
     - Your personality and character traits…
     - The things you're good at…

- Anything else 'they' like about you.

Make sure you only note the positive things.

➢ Role-play each person on your list this way.

You'll end up with a comprehensive portrait of your assets. *And from there:*

Next time you have a difficult moment in the context of *one* particular area of your life, pick up this inventory of all the things that are right with you, so that you'll instantly gain a broader view of your actual worth in your life at large.

Again, this will swiftly nip the potential impact of the negative self-talk in the bud, before it can do any damage to your overall sense of self-worth.

Or if this visualization didn't do the trick, here's the other way to uncover your assets…

2. Actually ask other people:

It's usually easier to give a thoughtful, accurate inventory of someone else's good qualities than your own. So that's exactly what *others* can do for *you*.

Here's what you do:

➢ Pick somebody you love, appreciate and/or trust. *(<-- This could be someone you've known for ages, or even someone you just met – perhaps someone listed in your Past Praise Prospectus.)*

➢ Ask that person to sit down with you and spend about three minutes telling you precisely what's good about you, and write down what they say word for word.

With that, don't let them get away with saying something vague, like *"You're nice,"* or *"You're wonderful."* They need to get specific, like…:

- *"You have a delightful imagination, you're articulate, your energy is contagious, and you help everyone around you to see the world in fresh, new ways."*
- *"You're really giving and kind. You touch people a lot, and you mean it. Anybody in trouble can come to you and feel soothed."*
- *"You're very skilled at what you do, and you have a fine eye for detail. You've got a great sense of humor, and everyone feels comfortable and validated around you."*

➢ If they come up with some abstract generality, ask them:

- *"How so?"*
- *"Can you tell me more about that?"*

This too will give you a nice inventory of your assets and positive traits.

Then next time you have a difficult moment in the context of *one* particular area of your life, pick up this comprehensive portrait of all the things that are *right*

with you, so that you'll instantly gain a broader view of your actual worth in your life at large.

Again, this will swiftly nip the potential impact of negative self-talk in the bud, before it can do any damage to your overall sense of self-worth.

Once you've compiled one or more of these resources, make several copies and put them in places where you'll see them often. *(<-- For instance, tape them to your bathroom mirror, stick them on your fridge, put them under your pillow, slide them in your pocket – put 'm everywhere.)*

Beyond all the things this does all by itself, the fresh and broader self-concept you'll gain this way puts you in a much more empowered position to deploy the third and final step…

Step #3 – Trigger the shift.

When you notice your inner voice gets overly negative in tone, deliberately flip your focus around, so that you turn it into an actual *tool* that can foster your happiness, performance and success.

Here's what you do:

1. **Step Back:**
   As a prerequisite, see yourself from a *psychological distance* – relinquish your first person perspective in favor of addressing yourself as "you" and/or by your first name, as if you're getting ready to talk to a good friend and/or watching yourself in a movie.

This guy gets it:

2. **Frameshift:**
   Don't try to convince yourself, or force-feed yourself a lie by trying to make yourself believe something your subconscious mind already knows *not* to be true. *Instead:*

   Stick to *proven* frameshifts that are *motivational*, *instructional* and *evaluative:*

✓ *Motivational Flip-Over:*
Reorient towards what you *want* to see from yourself, as opposed to what you *don't* want to see. For example:

- You don't want to take the critical angle of: "*You weren't focused enough*." *(<-- This implies blame, and is more self-defeating than constructive.)*

  Instead you want to focus more constructively, like: "*Not bad, but focus harder next time.*" *(<-- This is more motivating, and comes from the disidentified, distanced perspective mentioned above.)*

- You don't want to take the critical angle of: *"You're such a gluttonous pig"* when you ate a bag of potato chips while you were on a diet.

  Instead you want to focus more constructively, like: *"Perhaps a walk or a hike would make you feel better."*

- You don't want to take the critical angle of: *"Don't get upset."*

  Instead you want to focus more constructively, like: *"Stay cool."*

Please Note:

What's most important here is not so much to force yourself to actually say these words – although the above phrasings wouldn't hurt, since they're not designed to *convince*, but rather to *motivate* and *encourage*. *Instead:*

The goal here is only a *constructive frameshift*, which can instantly come about by asking yourself a simple question like:

"Okay, so what is it that I want to see from myself here?" (<-- As opposed to what you don't want.)

From there, here's how you can step things up…

✓ *Instructional Flip-Over:*
No matter how good your intentions, sooner or later a situation is going to occur that will bring out your negative inner voice – i.e. situations like the ones you identified under Step #1.

You dramatically increase the likelihood that you respond to them the way you want when you set rules for doing so *in advance.* [17]

The idea is to pre-define a clear instruction to yourself that will trigger the attitude and behavior you want to embody under those circumstances, so that you don't reactively fall victim to the negativity, desperation and whims of your inner critic in the moment.

The general format of such a predefined rule would be something along the lines of:

- *"When a situation like this occurs, do this"*
- *"In a situation like this, say this."*

For example:

- *"When I'm inclined to eat a bag of potato chips when I feel like crap, go for a 5-minute walk."*
- *"When someone criticizes my work and I feel offended, say: 'Thank you, let me give that some more thought,' and take some time later to find what truth the feedback holds."*
- *"When boss man lashes out at me again because he's having a bad day, stay cool and decide to come back and talk about it later when the emotional heat of the moment has subsided."*

So take a few moments to pre-define rules for the situations you identified under Step #1 that you already know would normally trigger the kind of debilitating self-talk you'd like to transform – and *write them down*.

Do the same thing in the event you did already fall off the wagon somewhere and react-ed in some undesirable way, so that you increase the chances of responding the way you should next time.

Then with your pre-defined rules established, there's the final kind of frameshift…

✓ *Evaluative Flip-Over:*
Swiftly nip negative self-talk in the bud that pertains to just *one* area of your life by recalling your pie chart *(<-- and/or any of the other resources you created under Step #2 above)*. This way you *instantly* broaden your self-concept and cancel out any overtaking negativity.

Then finally, here's how to actually trigger the shift…

3. Pull The Trigger

You can *activate* your pre-defined courses of action by thinking or actually speaking out an instructional *Trigger Word* or *Trigger Phrase* – as a prompt to carry them out. For this, short (mental) exclamations work better than extensive verbalizations.

For instance, *Trigger Terms* for the examples above could be…:

- ✓ FOCUS.
- ✓ WALK.
- ✓ FEEDBACK.
- ✓ STAY COOL & RETURN LATER.

- ✓ PIE CHART.
- ✓ PRAISE.
- ✓ SUCCESS.
- ✓ ASSETS.

Then when the situations you identified above actually occur, 'pull the trigger' with your Trigger Terms to carry out your pre-defined response.

Now I admit:

- It does take a little bit of time and effort to sit down with these exercises at first. *However:*
- Note that afterwards it's just a matter of 'pulling the trigger' with a simple *Trigger Word* or *Trigger Phrase* to shift your entire frame. From that, the tone of your inner voice and your ability to be your best in any situation will *automatically follow course*.
- Besides – this will end up saving you incredible amounts of time, energy and disappointment wasted on fruitlessly repeating affirmations and listening to generic reconditioning audios that make a marginal difference at best in changing your self-talk.

So put these techniques to work for you, and you'll notice that a favorable shift in your inner voice will settle in very quickly, naturally and without even specifically trying to change what it says.

And in turn, that will soon reflect in your overall moods, performance and success.

Start with a commitment of putting these techniques to work for 21 *consecutive* days. This will help make your *Self-Talk Shift* more habitual and automatic.

Nevertheless, please note that the *average* time it takes before a new habit becomes automatic is actually 66 days – and that's an *average*, with outliers depending on person and circumstances. [18]

That means for some it could take a little longer. But it could just as well take much less time, especially when you back up this 3-step process with some supplemental techniques that can enhance your results considerably.

In fact, that's precisely what you're about to learn next…

Truthfully – shifting your self-talk is just the *beginning* of the rewards you can reap from this process.

Because there's a huge extra dimension to it…

Final Words:
The Bigger Picture

As you've seen, when your self-talk is excessively negative, it can turn into a painful source of over-thinking, anxiety and even depression. *However:*

With the three simple steps outlined in this manual, you can swiftly take control of your self-talk and turn it into a *tool* to both master your psyche and foster your happiness, performance and success – without even having to try and change what it says.

But beyond that, there's actually a much greater payoff in it for you…

A Deeper Call:

You may remember A.A. Milne's story about Winnie the Pooh, Piglet and Rabbit wandering around in the Hundred Acre Wood:

- The three go around and around, and Rabbit just wouldn't shut his pie hole. *In fact:*
- Under his bossy, officious guidance, they actually end up totally lost and terrified.
- Eventually, Rabbit gets angry and takes off to find the way home – leaving Pooh and Piglet behind to wait for him to come back.
- But he never seems to return…

So after waiting for a while, Pooh turns to Piglet:

"Come on, Piglet, let's go home."

"But we're lost," said Piglet.

"Yes," said Pooh, *"but there are twelve pots of honey in my cupboard at home, and they are calling to my tummy. I couldn't hear them before, because Rabbit would talk."*

This is what happens when your yapping inner voice transforms or disappears:

- Your chattering, *'rabbit-like'* inner critic wanders away – which leaves a quiet space for something else to come through… *Indeed:*

- That silent sweetness actually allows you to hear your deeper intuitive hunches, creative inspirations and eye-opening epiphanies that offer solutions to problems that may have previously seemed impossible to overcome.

And it's those metaphorical *"pots of honey calling to your tummy"* that point the way for you to enhance your life in ways you can't even begin to imagine – no matter where you are now, or what it is you secretly dream of.

This way, taking control of your self-talk is just the beginning of a much bigger and potentially life-transforming process.

So to add a little more fuel to the fire of your *Self-Talk Shift*, and further boost your power to shape your own destiny and make your desires and aspirations come true, here's another gift for you to unwrap:

Free Follow-Up Video Training:

To further support your *Self-Talk Shift*, watch your email for a special link that gives you complimentary access to a quick little 2-part video training that shows you how to…:

- Eliminate the *core reasons why* you've had excessively negative self-talk in the first place.

- *Flip an inner switch* that completely transforms your self-talk without even having to try to be more positive.

- Automatically boost your mindset, happiness and motivation, so that you align at all levels to make manifesting your goals and desires a *natural outcome*, as opposed to a constant struggle.

And as a result:

- Your intuition will come online more strongly.

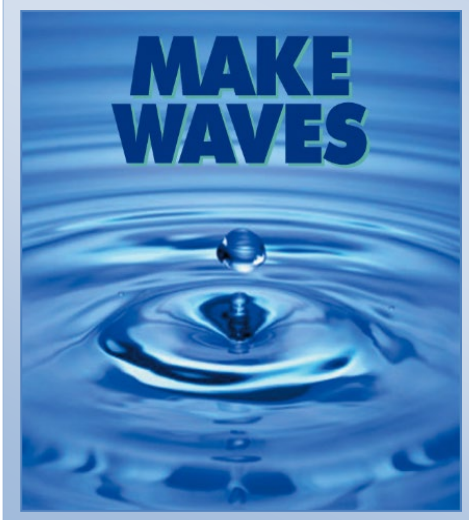
- Creative inspirations become more commonplace.

- And your happiness, performance and success will improve in ways you may have never considered possible.

So stay tuned and keep an eye on your email. (<-- Or if someone else gifted you this ebook, sign up for the free training yourself here.)

I look forward to hearing about your experience and success stories resulting from this process.

See you soon!



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