

You May Be Sabotaging Yourself – Seven Self-Talk Strategies to Save You

By Victoria Munro

You may be sabotaging yourself by what you say to yourself. We may not always be aware of it, but we're constantly talking to ourselves—carrying on an endless running dialog. Some experts claim that approximately 45,000 thoughts—true and false, harmful and helpful—pass through our minds each day.

That little voice in our heads is always evaluating and telling us about the situations we find ourselves in. It's a powerful influence, affecting our attitude, how we feel about ourselves and how we behave. That inner voice can help or harm us.

Whether we like to admit it or not, much of our internal banter is negative. This self trash-talk reinforces wrong beliefs, fuels stress and can become a self-fulfilling prophecy. What we tell ourselves can also to boost our effectiveness and self-esteem, and ease anxiety.

Below are seven helpful self-talk strategies you can use to your advantage:

- 1. Notice what you're saying** to yourself. Consciously stop, pay attention to those words and, if necessary, rephrase them.
- 2. Commit to being kind to yourself.** Speak words of encouragement and hope. Give yourself the same grace you'd give your best friend. Remember you're human, and don't hold yourself to absurdly high standards of perfection.
- 3. Keep your conversation positive.** Avoid self-limiting chatter and saying, "I can't." God has promised to enable you to do all He calls you to do. Aim for an attitude of gratitude by recounting what you're thankful for.
- 4. Choose to change** what you say. If you find yourself rehashing negative scenes, replay them with truth or view them from a different perspective. When you hear yourself complaining or criticizing, quickly alter those words.
- 5. Be careful what you hear.** Much of today's media is designed to influence our buying decisions, our values and what we think. Tell yourself the truth—read and meditate on Scriptures about who God says you are and how He sees you. 1 John 4:10
- 6. Shun shame** over something you've done. Don't replay it in your head. Since shame works in secret, it may help to share your faux pas with a trusted friend.
- 7. Use your feelings.** If you find yourself feeling sad, stressed or grumpy, stop and look at what have you been telling yourself. Changing your words may lift your mood.

Words kill, words give life;
they're either poison or fruit
— you choose." Proverbs 18:21 (MSG)