



Intraspectus Learning Series ::: June 2005
www.intraspectus.com/learn/
Article By: Jeffrey P. Kerekes, MSSW, LCSW

Talking To Yourself Isn't Just For Tyler Durden

Are you talking to yourself? If not, perhaps you should. Positive self-talk is one way to begin manifesting positive change in your life. Just in the same way as telling yourself you are a loser over and over can have detrimental effects, positive self-talk can lead to positive outcomes.

Avoiding Self-esteem Bankruptcy

Oftentimes, we are our own worst enemies. We can be more harsh and critical to ourselves than others would consider being, even if they're a serious jerk. When the negative self-talk starts, notice it and move on. When you think about it, they are only 'old tapes' (MP3s?) we play, and can be changed. Don't be harsh on yourself for being harsh on yourself, that leads to more straws on your proverbial back. Just work on noting negative self-talk and move on. Say "I'm being critical," stop the criticism and start over. Practice catching yourself being that jerk – but don't call yourself that (of course), then start over.

Hearing Voices Is Healthy, When They're Your Own

Negative self-talk brings you down so positive self-talk can be your uppers (without fear of incarceration by DEA). Find a small saying, a mantra, that builds self-esteem. The saying may change as you become more certain about what is making you feel bad. You may start off by saying "I'm feeling energetic" when you really want to go to bed at 5:30pm. However, you may realize that it isn't 'being tired,' but feeling worthless. In this case, your self-talk may be "I'm worth it." Find a saying that fits, adapt it along the way and practice!

We humans are funny creatures. Making change can be said to break down into two sides to a coin: by changing the way we think (our cognitions), we can change the way we behave, act and feel (our behavior); by going through the motions, our thoughts can catch up with our behaviors. Even though you might only want to go to bed, drink into oblivion, or enter a cake eating contest, by forcing yourself to go out for a walk or out with friends, you may begin to feel better simply by doing something different. By saying "I'm happy," even when you feel like crap, can lead you to feeling better.

Other Things You Can Do Besides Brining Down Capitalism Or Loosing Teeth Fighting

No, I am not going to say take up basket weaving – unless you like to weave. If you are in a rut, it will take extra effort to get out of it, that's the inevitable piece of a rut. Even 5 months of making \$.40/hour (down from \$673 per hour, Sorry Martha) is an opportunity to make significant change. Find something different that is likely to make you feel better, something to recharge your batteries. The idea is not to do the 'same old thing' since that may not have been working. This 'something' doesn't need to cost money, take much time, and should be helping you in the long run.