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Negative self-talk can severely affect your mental health and outlook on life. The first step to change is to recognize its presence. Identifying various types of negative thinking, such as all-or-nothing these patterns can lead to more positive thoughts and positive behaviors. Take action to counter negative self-talk by validating it and responding with more balanced thoughts. Practice practical tips for fostering positive thinking, like gratitude journaling or surrounding yourself with supportive people. Recognize the long-term impact of negative self-talk, including greater anxiety, depression, and lowered self-esteem. Practice actionable strategies every day to create that internal dialogue, and you will strengthen your mental stability. It distorts your reality, so that you doubt everything these toxic thoughts is the first step toward retaking your positivity. By challenging these patterns, you can shift your mindset and adopt self-talk together. What Is Negative self-talk?Negative self-talk?Neg talk is the inner monologue that disparages and belittles our value as a person. This inner voice often takes the form of harsh self-criticism, doubt, and second-guessing nearly every decision we make. It shapes a lot of our self-esteem and affects how we act. When you say to yourself, I always mess things up, you prepare yourself for feelings of inadequacy. That kind of thinking can leave you gun-shy in the future. You may notice negative self-talk during everyday interactions or in moments of challenge. Its something that you can manage. With awareness and practice, you can learn to counteract these negative thoughts and replace them with more constructive ones. Effects on Mental WellbeingVenting constantly about yourself can deflate your self-esteem and confidence. Research indicates that this pattern of thinking is associated with greater anxiety and depression. When you constantly criticize yourself, it erects walls to happiness and satisfying relationships. You might have a hard time engaging with others or feel alone because you have a poor view of yourself. Negative self-talk doesnt just hurt how you feel personally. It also affects how you feel personally. breaking free from the hold of these patterns is recognizing them as such. Why Negative Self-Talk OccursNegative self-talk often comes from childhood experiences. Folks develop this habit due to criticism received from parents or peers. Societal pressures and norms feed into self-criticism. sense of inadequacy. Previous failures can form todays mindset. If you think perfection is the goal, any mistake sets off a negative-thinking cycle. Emotional scars from particular instances can also trigger such thought patterns, so the negativity becomes a default reaction. Knowing where your negative self-talk comes from is important to overcoming it. Once you can identify triggers and recognize patterns, you can start to take this inner critic apart. Recognize Your Inner CriticIn order to effectively combat negative self-talk, you need to become aware of your inner critic. This internal voice usually sends messages that cut at your confidence and sense of worth. Notice the tone and content of these thoughts. You may hear Youre not good enough or You will never succeed. If you can wrestle the authority from this inner critic, you can start to question its validity. Ask yourself: Is this thought based on facts or assumptions? Knowing how this inner dialogue impacts your mood and behavior is essential to cultivating a healthier mindset. Common Negative Thought PatternsThere are several common negative thinking patterns that can skew your perception and impact your choices. These include: Viewing situations in black-and-white terms without recognizing the gray areas. Overgeneralization: Making broad conclusions based on a single event. Focusing only on the negatives while ignoring positives.Discounting the Positive: Dismissing achievements as unimportant.Wherever you see these patterns in your own daily life, its key to recognize them so that you can break free from them.See also Positive Self-Talk: Transforming Self-Doubt into Self-BeliefWhen you notice these thoughts, reframe them into positive ones.Instead of saying, I never get it right, reframe it to, Ive struggled; however, Ive also succeeded. This change in focus can have a huge impact on your overall mental health. Over time, these thoughts can develop into chronic stress and anxiety, an inescapable cycle that seems insurmountable. Rumination, the tendency to ruminate on negative experiences, can exacerbate feelings of depression. This effect is particularly strong in women. For each of the unhealthy thought patterns, write down methods you can use to combat them. These strategies prompt you to give yourself a moment to consider your thoughts prior to emotionally responding. For example, ask yourself whether what youre upset about will matter in five years. Instead, actively disrupt these negative cycles and gain a more positive outlook. This will naturally result in better overall well-being. 1. Catastrophizing and Its ImpactCatastrophizing involves blowing things way out of proportion, which leads to unnecessary anxiety. For example, when you make a mistake at work, you may believe youll get fired. This way of thinking can form a fear cycle that can cripple your performance. To combat catastrophizing, challenge these thoughts by asking yourself how likely the worst outcome really is. Whether its deep breathing or focusing on your surroundings, try grounding techniques. These techniques will give your mind a new direction in times of trouble.2. Personalizing happens when you take excessive responsibility for failures that are not exclusively your own. For example, if a project fails, you might blame yourself completely; you wont look outside. This excessive self-blame can erode your self-esteem and stifle personal growth. The key is to decouple your identity from the outside results everyone screws up. Being able to let go of guilt can enable you to reflect on yourself in healthier ways. 3. Overgeneralization and Limiting BeliefsOvergeneralization draws wide conclusions based on single events. If you fail at one thing, you think you cant do it at all. This fixed mindset holds you back and prevents you from taking risks. Instead, start viewing setbacks as discrete events and not failures. Heading into evidence of past successes counteracts limiting beliefs and pushes toward a more balanced view of your skill.4. Filtering Out PositivityFiltering is focusing only on the bad stuff while filtering out the good stuff. This pattern skews your perception of reality, making it difficult to appreciate achievements or good experiences. Practice counter-filtering by taking notice of what did work, rather than just what didnt. Writing lists of good experiences reminds you that good exists. This practice puts things back in balance in your head.5. Polarizing and All-Or-Nothing ThinkingPolarizing is like living in a black and white world; everything is either great or awful, with no grey. This kind of thinking sets up extremes and creates disappointment when reality does not live up to these extremes. When you embrace a more nuanced perspective, youll be able to understand the challenges better.Rather than this will never work, try and instead of or, which encourages flexibility.6. Mind Reading and AssumptionsMind reading is assuming other people think bad things about you for no reason at all.For instance, if a colleague doesnt smile at you, that may lead you to believe he or she hates you. This way of thinking sets you up for additional unnecessary stress and misunderstanding. Open communication is important; clarify assumptions directly with others if you can. Learn to focus on facts instead of the persons judgment so that you can lessen anxiety around mind reading. 7. Fortune Telling and Future WorriesFortune telling is predicting bad outcomes, with no basis in reality. You start worrying about things that havent even happened yet, which leads to debilitating fear or avoidance. Instead of letting this pattern run your life, use grounding techniques to anchor yourself in the present moment. Focus on what needs to be done instead of worrying about what might happen to take back control of your thoughts.8. Should Statements and ExpectationsBy using should statements youre setting up rigid rules. When we fall short of those expectations, we often feel guilty or flawed. For instance, having the thought I should be productive all the time puts unrealistic expectations. these statements into more flexible alternatives like I would like to which allows room for imperfection and growth. Practicing self-compassion when falling short helps mitigate feelings of guilt.9. Emotional Reasoning is the belief that feelings are facts, something that distorts perceptions and leads to poor decision-making. If you are anxious about an upcoming presentation, you might start to believe it will go badly. Those emotions cant cloud your judgment! We need to ask ourselves if these feelings are legitimate in light of the actual facts. 1. Cognitive Restructuring is a powerful technique that replaces unproductive estructuring technique that replaces unproductive estructuring technique thought patterns. The first step is to identify cognitive distortions those irrational thoughts that can form a negative mindset. When you catch yourself thinking, I always mess things up, but I also succeed. Over time, practicing this technique every day will change you. Patience and persistence are the key it takes time to rewire entrenched thoughts.2. Start a Gratitude journal Starting a gratitude journal for. This easy practice builds gratitude and better all-around mental health by strengthening positive focus. Flipping back through previous posts can be a reminder of whats right in your life, which can be helpful in counteracting negative self-talk.3. Practice Mindfulness into your day as a doctor, too. Techniques such as mindful breathing or mindful walking help you become an observer of your thoughts instead of a reactor. This practice has been shown to effectively reduce stress and anxiety. 4. Show Yourself compassion when things are tough, you need to be kind to yourself compassion. Self-southing, such as breathing or self-talk.Realize that everyone makes mistakes, and embrace a compassionate mindset that will boost your mental health.5. Engage in Journaling Activities Journaling about your landscape.Get these negative thoughts down on paper and start to switch them into positive thoughts. Elevate your emotional state with this therapeutic process.6. Affirm Positive Statements DailyDaily positive affirmations can help you get your self-esteem back.Start repeating a list of personalized affirmations that define who you are.For instance saying I am capable or I deserve happiness can rewire the way you see yourself. Its important to find what works for you, so use these affirmations consistently for the best results. 7. Meditate for Mental ClarityMeditation is a great way to quiet your mind and get some clarity. accustomed to it. Meditation helps manage negative thoughts because you can observe them and not attach to them. Experiment with meditation techniques what works for one person wont necessarily work for another, so do some trial and error. 1. Shift Negative Thoughts to NeutralityTo start changing your mindset, identify when negative thoughts pop up.That awareness is key; it helps you move those thoughts to neutral statements.Instead of, I always screw things up, try saying, I notice Im feeling like I messed up.This method will let you feel your feelings without casting yourself in a negative light. your thoughts; its about noticing that they come and go.Practicing this neutrality can be a stepping stone toward more positive thinking.2. Replace negative thoughts with positive alternatives, it can create a huge improvement in your outlook. The first thing you need to do to write an affirmation is create a list of them. For instance, thinking, I am not good enough, swap it with, I am capable and deserving. Look closely at everything yourself succeeding in various situationscan further bolster your positive. Speak Positive Thoughts AloudSaying the right things out loud to yourself can help you believe the impossible. See also Self-Determination Theory: Understanding Leadership DriversSpeak affirmations out loud every day to make a dramatic difference in your head. When you hear yourself each day. This practice brings an environment where self-compassion can thrive.4. Think Like a Supportive FriendTo become more resilient, you must treat yourself, I cant believe I failed, build a new approach. Tell yourself, Its alright to mess up; Ill learn from this.Asking yourself to treat yourself in chronic negative self-talk is associated with a number of mental health risks. When you involve yourself in chronic negative thinking, it can be as damaging as anxiety and depression. Research also suggests that chronic negativity can lead to emotional ill-being. Fighting these unhealth. If negative self-talk consumes you, go to a pro. Taking this step can be an enormous help to your recovery. 2. Higher Stress Levels and AnxietyNegative self-talk is a major contributor to high-stress levels. Physiologically, stress can manifest through headaches, fatigue, and heart problems. These physical symptoms are typically signs that a person is experiencing increased anxiety, so its important to do what you can to alleviate stress. Implementing positive coping strategies, such as mindfulness or exercise, can help reduce anxiety and improve overall well-being.3. Decreased Success Rates and MotivationNegative self-talk can kill your motivation. Self-doubt often sneaks in and makes personal goals can help build your motivation and confidence gradually.4. Other Harmful Effects on LifeThe consequences of negativity can place a strain on relationships and prevent a person from establishing social connections, leading to a cycle of loneliness and hopelessness. By identifying these self-destructive thought patterns, you empower yourself to act. Once you free yourself from them, they life much better. Negative self-talk can be hard to stop, but the first step is identifying it. Its important to identify the types of negative thinking. Once you understand how they affect your life, you can actively fight those thoughts with practical techniques. Its all about being kinder to yourself, replacing those harsh inner dialogues with these things, and youre absolutely not alone. Take action today put some of these tips we talked about into action and see what you can do with them. Try it out, and start thinking for yourself in a positive way!P.S. If youd like extra support on this journey, feel free to reach out! Id love to chat and help you develop even more strategies for tackling negative self-talk. What is negative self-talk. What is negative self-talk. What is negative self-talk is the voice in your head telling you youre not good enough. It can lead to feelings of inadequacy and anxiety, affecting mental health and overall well-being. How can I identify negative thinking patterns? Notice your thoughts. Look for repeating patterns of self-criticism or negative thinking? Common types include all-or-nothing thinking, overgeneralization, and catastrophizing. These distortions can warp your perception and magnify feelings of negativity. How can I challenge my negative self-talk? Use cognitive restructuring techniques. Challenge my negative self-talk? Use cognitive restructuring techniques. for fostering positive thinking?Make gratitude a daily practice, do mindfulness exercises, and hang out with supportive folks.Little changes can help you see things differently.What are the consequences of negative self-talk?Negative has a poor effect on relationships. Can negative self-talk be changed? Yes, but only by hard work over time. By practicing awareness and using techniques to combat negativity, you can develop a healthier mindset. Photo by Zac Durant on UnsplashEveryone you have ever known has a stream of dialogue running through their brain at all times. We talk and listen to ourselves more than you might think. In this world of hustle and perfectionism, negative self-talk has become a prominent topic in scientific research. The effects of negative self-talk might surprise you!What is Negative self-talk has become a prominent topic in scientific research. like:Theres no use in even trying, Wow, Im so stupid, I ruin everything, We go about our lives hardly giving our thoughts that they become ingrained in our psyche without us noticing. Its important to understand the effects of negative self-talk and how it impacts our mood and overall health.Not all negative thought loops are the same. There are 4 different types of negative self-talk, and they all present themselves differently. Catastrophizing is a type of negative self-talk defined by expecting the worst. An example of catastrophizing is driving to work and thinking about getting in a car wreck that would leave you physically impaired for life. It doesn't always have to be that dramatic, though. Catastrophizing is that you feel the associated emotions as if it were really happening. This article from the National Institute of Health explains the tendency to catastrophize after a traumatic event. The diagram in the article illustrates the cyclical nature of negative thinking and how confronting the catastrophize after a traumatic event. The diagram in the article illustrates the cyclical nature of negative thinking and how confronting the catastrophize after a traumatic event. The diagram in the article illustrates the cycle. Polarizing comes into play when you see things as either good or bad no in between. With this type of negative self-talk, there is no middle ground. Perfectionism is an attribute of polarizing, and you may find yourself avoiding the things you love in fear of messing up.For example, you commit to hitting the gym four days a week. If something comes up and you only make it to the gym three days out of the week, you chastise yourself for being lazy. You never praise yourself for the three days you stuck to your commitment. Your entire outlook is dominated by the one day you missed. Polarizing negative self-talk allows no room for compromise and sets an unrealistic standard for yourself. Filtering is categorized by only seeing the bad in every situation. When you filter, your brain chooses not to see the good areas of your experiences. For example, you went out to a party and spilled your drink. You filter out how much fun you had with your friends and focus on how embarrassing it was to make a mess. Filtering tends to make everything look worse than it is. Since yourself. Personalizing, you dont even have to be in a bad situation to feel like youre to blameAn example of personalizing would be reaching out to a friend but getting their voicemail. Instead of assuming they are busy, you automatically suspect they are mad at you and assume you did something wrong. You might even feel this way until you hear from them again. Photo by Ilyass SEDDOUG on UnsplashThe Effects of Negative Self TalkThe effects of negative self-talk can influence both your mental and physical health. The release of catecholamines such as epinephrine (adrenaline), dopamine (pleasure hormone), and norepinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine). talk. These hormones circulate in your blood and increase your cortisol (stress) level. If cortisol is chronically present in the blood, it can decrease the volume of the brain. This is the area of the brain. Plus, when cortisol is combined with hormones like adrenaline, your body goes into trauma mode. This means your senses are readying themselves to fight for their life when in reality, you just spilled your drink. When your hormones circulate in this way, it creates a feedback loop that affects your mood, weight control, motivation, and heart health.Negative self-talk can create a myriad of symptoms that include anxiety, depression, perfectionism, low self-esteem, and chronic fatigue. If any of this sounds familiar to you, dont worry. There are ways to combat the effects of negative self-talk. With a little practice, you can break the cycle and take control of your internal dialogue. Pay Attention to Your Inner DialogueThe first thing you need to do when coping with the effects of negative self-talk is to pay attention to your head. Remember, you have to know your opponent to defeat them. Take a few days to really listen to yourself. Jot down different thoughts you notice, and try to determine a trigger for your negative thoughts. This is where knowing the different types of negative self-talk comes in handy.Dont beat yourself up if you miss anything (polarizing). Just do your best and see what you come up with at the end. When you have a good idea of how you speak to yourself, you can start to change it. Confront the ThoughtWhen you find yourself thinking negatively, confront the thought head-on. For example, if you find yourself some reason. Ask yourself whats the worst that could happen from eating one cookie? Use reason and logic to dig yourself out of the spiral. You know that one cookie wont hurt your progress. If anything, it is a reward for doing so well. Ive always believed that you can think negative. James BaldwinIf you start to catastrophize about your cookie choices, remind yourself that you have successfully stuck to your diet up to this point and have the determination to continue. Confronting the negative with PositiveOnce you do this a few times, you will begin to notice your thoughts, you can start replacing the negative with the positive. Instead of thinking I was too stupid to get that promotion. Thats why they passed me up, Try this instead: I didnt get the promotion, but that means I am open for better opportunities, We cant control the thought that comes after it. Its okay to catch yourself thinking negatively, as long as you change it to something get discouraged if you dont notice a change right away. This is a process that takes time and patience. Think of your head it many times, and you know the way like the back of your head. When you replace negative self-talk with positivity, you are pioneering a new path. You a cutting away brush and fighting for every inch. With persistence, your new path will become easier and the old path will grow up!Repeating positive affirmations can help curve your tendency towards negativity. Again, its important to stay consistent when practicing positive self-talk. You have the potential to change your mood and the physical makeup of your brain!Determine the TriggerOnce you have practiced confronting the thought, you can start to pinpoint the triggers. Keep in mind that triggers, contact a licensed therapist to help you navigate these feelings. Sometimes negative self-talk can originate from childhood trauma, PTSD, and other trauma-based experiences. Simple things can trigger the effects of negative self-talk, as well. Take a personal inventory of the past few weeks and notice if anything has happened to bruise your ego. Maybe you had a falling out with a friend or didnt get that promotion at work. Feelings feed your self-talk. Once youve determined your trigger, start working on building positivity around that trigger. Understanding why youre experiencing the effects of negative self-talk will eventually allow you to gain control of your thoughts in the long run. BreathePhoto by Valeriia Bugaiova on UnsplashIf all of this seems overwhelming to you, know that you arent alone. Sometimes the best thing you can do is take a deep breath. Watch this video if you cant bring yourself to focus on the negative thought. Breathe in and out with the shapes for as long as you need. Eventually, you will feel your body start to relax. You can revisit your thoughts when you feel ready. Your breath is a physiological cheat code to reduce anxiety. It is a tool you always have with you, so use it. Bettering yourself and breaking negative habits can be difficult. You may find that working on your negative habits can be difficult. work through this experience. With time, you can conquer anything! ABOUT THE AUTHORNatasha is the founder of Natasha Eckelbarger Writing. She uses her years of marketing and mental health experience to help professionals in the mental health field skyrocket their business through strategic content. Natasha is passionate about helping menta health professionals spread awareness about the importance of psychological well-being. You can find her on her site, or on LinkedIn.Originally published at on March 3, 2020. Talking to yourself is completely normal. But if your inner monologue says unkind things about you, points out your flaws, and tells you that nothing is going to work out, youve probably fallen into the habit of negative self-talk. In this guide, youll learn strategies for overcoming it. Sections What is negative self-talk?Negative self-talk math. Ive lost my car keys again. Why do I always mess up? The barista messed up my order. Why do people never listen to me? Negative self-talk tan help to think of negative self-talk as a bad habit. With persistence, you can stop doing it and learn to speak to yourself more kindly. Here are some techniques to help you deal with your unhelpful thoughts and change the language you use when you talk to yourself.1. Identify your inner critic?. Learning to challenge it can help you minimize or even stop negative self-talk. Traditional therapy - done onlineFind a therapist from BetterHelp's network of therapists for your everyday therapy needs. Take a quiz, get matched, and start getting support via phone or video sessions. Their plans start at \$64 per week. Use the button below to get 20% off your first month at BetterHelp + a \$50 coupon valid for any SocialSelf course. To receive your \$50 SocialSelf coupon, sign up for BetterHelp using the orange button. Email the order confirmation to SocialSelf to get your unique coupon code.Start BetterHelp's quiz The first step to challenging the critic is to recognize it. The next time you talk to yourself in a way that makes you feel bad, ask yourself, Is this my inner critic talking? If you arent sure, watch for these signs that may suggest your inner critic has appeared: It uses dramatic, all-or-nothing language, such as Always and NeverIt uses lots of judgmental language such as Should or Ought toIt sounds like a person who criticized you in the past, like a bully, unpleasant boss, or critical parent; for example, it might use similar words or phrasesIt is good at leaping to conclusions on the basis of no or very little evidenceIt doesnt offer solutions; its only good at putting you downIt can be helpful to note down your negative self-talk, for example, in a journal or by making notes on your phone, along with how it makes you feel. Writing your thoughts down can make it easier to identify and challenge them.2. Give your inner critic a nickname This strategy can make it easier to spot, and detach yourself from, unhelpful thoughts such as negative self-talk. Some people like to pick a nickname that makes their inner critic seem less scary or credible. The next time you hear your critic start talking, try saying, Oh, there [nickname] goes again, talking nonsense as usual. A recommendation If you want to improve your social skills, self-confidence, and ability to bond, take our 1-minute quiz 3. Challenge your inner criticOnce youve identified your inner critic, you can challenge it. By asking a few questions, you may be able to spot the flaws in your critics logic. This exercise can make your negative self-talk feel less convincing. It can help to ask yourself these questions: Is my inner critic just repeating what other people have said to me in the past? What evidence is there that my inner critic is wrong? Is my inner critic taking everything too personally? For example: Your inner critic says, Ill never learn how to drive. Im just no good at it! In fact, youve mastered lots of other skills previously, and your instructor has said you are making progress, so this comment goes against the available evidence.Your inner critic says, My friend hasnt texted me, and its been six hours since I sent her a message. Shes sick of me and doesnt like me anymore. I can never keep friends. I hate myself. The reality is that your friend is very thought is true. A thought can be extremely compelling and trigger strong emotions, but that doesnt mean its accurate.4. Learn about unhelpful thinking errors. In the field of psychology, these mistakes are called cognitive distortions. If you become familiar with common cognitive distortions, but that doesnt mean its accurate.4. it can be easier to understand and minimize your negative self-talk. It can feel empowering to know exactly what your inner critic is doing, and it can be reassuring to know that many other people have the same problem. Here are 4 common types of cognitive distortions: 1. Personalizing: Taking every setback or difficult situation personally. Example: Its terrible that my partner failed his driving test. If Id insisted on taking him out to practice more on the weekends instead of going into work, he would have passed.2. Filtering: Focusing on unpleasant or difficult aspects of a situation and ignoring everything else. Example: You get four A grades and one C on your exams, and all you can think about is the C.3. Catastrophizing: Immediately leaping to the worst-case scenario when something goes wrong. Example: After making a minor mistake, you think, Great, now my boss will know Im totally useless. Ill lose my job, I wont be able to pay my rent, and then Ill be homeless. 4. Polarizing: Seeing things in all-or-nothing terms. Everything is either good or bad. Example: You get well with your sister. But one evening, she forgets to call as promised. You think, She hates me! She doesnt care. She never did.To learn more about cognitive distortions, check out this list from PsychCentral.5. Swap negative self-talk for realistic responses. After identifying your inner critic and its faulty thinking patterns, the next step is to replace your harsh self-talk with thoughts that are balanced, realistic, and compassionate. This technique is used in talking therapies such as Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). You dont have to pretend that everything is great, deny your real feelings, or convince yourself that you are always happy. Your goal is to acknowledge the reality of your situation without needlessly putting yourself down or making unhelpful, sweeping generalizations. For example: Negative self-talk: Ive burned the cakes for the party. Everyone will be so disappointed. I cant do anything right! Take this quiz and see how you can improve your social lifeTake this quiz and get a custom report based on your unique personality and goals. Start improving your confidence, your conversation skills, or your ability to bond - in less than an hour. Start the quiz. Realistic, positive self-talk: This is an example of catastrophizing. Its a shame that the cakes didnt work out. The guests might be a little disappointed, but its not really a big deal. Ive made some other nice snacks for the party, and I can always pick up some cake from the store. It can also help to reword your negative self-talk by using neutral, non-judgmental language. [2] For example: I hate my legs. They are too short and chunky could become Id prefer to have longer, slimmer legs. Im so lazy. I never seem to get all my chores done could become I would like to be more productive and have a cleaner home. Keep your expectations realistic. These techniques may seem simple, but reframing your thoughts requires practice and reflection before it becomes automatic. Its also important to know that you wont be able to get rid of negative self-talk completely; even positive thinkers put themselves down occasionally. You dont have to engage with your inner critic every time it speaks, but try to make a habit of challenging it. This article on positive self-talk might be helpful.6. Talk to yourself as you would talk to a friendMany people naturally speak kindly to their friends yet show themselves very little compassion. If you can get into the habit of pretending that you are your own best friend, it might become easier to work through your negative self-talk. The next time you use negative self-talk, pause for a moment and ask yourself, What would be a more compassionate, useful thing to say? For example imagine you apply for a job you really want. Unfortunately, the interviews didnt go very well. If youre prone to negative self-talk, you might say to yourself, Well, you wont get a job now! Youve always been rubbish at interviews. Youll never have the career you want. report based on your unique personality and goals. Start improving your confidence, your conversation skills, or your ability to bond - in less than an hour. Start the quiz. But if your friend were in the same situation, you wouldnt be so unkind. Instead, youd remind your friend that they are a capable person who can cope with setbacks. Youd probably say something like, Oh, Im sorry to hear that. Interviews are difficult. I know its frustrating. Have you found any other jobs to apply for?7. Practice mindfulness Mindfulness can help you overcome negative self-talk. People who score higher on measures of mindfulness also report experiencing less shame[4] and find it easier to let go of negative thoughts.[5] There are lots of simple mindfulness and meditation exercises you can try on the Headspace app or Smiling Mind.8. Practice gratitude Research has found a link between gratitude could help you feel more kindly towards yourself and reduce your negative self-talk. At the end of each day, try to name at least 3 things you are grateful for. According to one study, writing a daily gratitude list can significantly increase your overall happiness and reduce negativity within a fortnight. [7]You might read this article to find more tips on how to practice gratitude.9. Put trivial mistakes in perspective Putting events in perspective can defuse negative self-talk. When you start beating yourself, Will this even matter a day/week/month/year from now? Is my reaction to this situation out of proportion?For example, lets say you accidentally call a coworker by your best friends name when youre chatting at lunch. You think, How could I have done that?! This is so embarrassing! In this kind of scenario, it can help to remind yourself that most people dont care so much about your mistakes, and theyll probably forget within a few hours.10. Repeat your negative thoughts out loudYour inner critic probably makes a lot of logical errors that might sound ridiculous when you articulate them. Some people find that speaking in a silly voice makes their self-critical thoughts feel less threatening. Consider online therapy allows you to speak to a licensed therapy allows you to speak to a licensed therapy. at \$64 per week. Use the link below to get 20% off your first month at BetterHelp + a \$50 coupon valid for any SocialSelf course. To receive your \$50 SocialSelf to get your unique coupon code. Click here to learn more 11. Get professional helpIf you have tried to change your self-talk and challenge your inner critic but feel as though you arent making much progress, consider seeing a therapist. Negative self-talk can be a symptom of a mental health problem such as depression that requires treatment. We recommend BetterHelp for online therapy, since they offer unlimited messaging and a weekly session, and are cheaper than going to a therapist's office. Their plans start at \$64 per week. If you use this link, you get 20% off your first month at BetterHelp + a \$50 coupon valid for any SocialSelf course: Click here to learn more about BetterHelp.(To receive your \$50 SocialSelf coupon, sign up with our link. Then, email BetterHelps order confirmation to us to receive your personal code. You can use this code for any of our courses.) What causes negative self-talk?Negative self-talk talk.Your upbringing. For example, if your parents were critical and negative, you may have copied their behavior as a child. If someone has criticized you in the past, you may have internalized their opinions. Your inner monologue may even resemble their voice.[2]Mental health problems. Negative self-talk is associated with various mental health problems, including anxiety and depression.[8] Genetic factors.[8] Some psychological research suggests that due to genetic differences may influence someones susceptibility to negative self-talk. However, its important to note that genes arent destiny. You can choose to work on eliminating negative self-talk.What are the effects of negative self-talk?Negative self-talk has toxic effects; it can damage your mental health, relationships, and job prospects.Specifically, it can damage your mental health. feed into your fears. For example, it might convince you that you arent capable of doing your job, which can make you feel stressed. Procrastination. If you are frequently self-critical, you might delay starting tasks in case you mess them up. Reduced resilience in times of stress. If you cant encourage and support yourself through difficult times, stressful situations may feel overwhelming.Relationship issues.[2] For example, if you constantly look for reassurance from other people, this may put a strain on your relationships.Limited thinking. If you are focused on what you cant do, you might miss valuable opportunities at work and in your personal life.Depression. Beating yourself up, rumination, refusing to acknowledge your positive traits, and frequent self-criticism[10] are classic signs of depression. Chronic low self-confidence. If you repeatedly tell yourself that you cant do things or that you will always fail, it can be hard to feel confidence. If you repeatedly tell yourself that you cant do things or that you will always fail, it can be hard to feel confidence. If you repeatedly tell yourself that you cant do things or that you will always fail, it can be hard to feel confidence. (2018). How to Reduce Negative Self-Talk for a Better Life. 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V., Alessandri, G., Eisenberg, N., Kupfer, A., Steca, P., Caprara, M. G., Yamaguchi, S., Fukuzawa, A., & Abela, J. (2012). The Positivity Scale. Psychological Assessment, 24(3), 701712.Porter, A. C., Zelkowitz, R. L., Gist, D. C., & Cole, D. A. (2019). Self-Evaluation and Depressive Symptoms: A Latent Variable Analysis of Self-Esteem Shame-Proneness, and Self-Criticism. Journal of Psychopathology and Behavioral Assessment, 41(2), 257270. Free training: Conversational threading" to avoid awkward silenceLearn a proven technique to get past empty small talkImprove socially without doing weird out-of-your-comfort-zone stunts. Instantly beat self-consciousness with the "OFC-method"See how you can go "from boring to bonding" in less than 7 words. Start my free training A lot of mental and emotional suffering comes from the way we talk to ourselves in our own minds, what psychologists call negative self-talk. In this article well cover what negative self-talk really is, the most common types of negative self-talk (sometimes called Cognitive Distortions), and some strategies you can use to identify and start to change your own unhelpful negative self-talk. Feel free to use the links below to jump to a specific topic youre interested in: When people ask me what I do, I respond with, Im a psychologist. Oh, neat they say as they turn to walk away.But occasionally people stick around and want to learn a little more about what I do as a psychologist and therapist.If they arent scared off by my initial rush of enthusiasm at someone being genuinely interested, I often explain what I do like this: I help people identify and unlearn mental habits that are causing problems in their lives. Of course thats a bit cryptic, so I typically follow it up with some clarification: Just like we all have physical habits brushing our teeth before bed, twirling our teeth before Negative Self-Talk.For example, whenever another driver on the road near me does something I think is dumb, the little voice in my head almost always says: You idiot, watch where youre going!Its a not-very-nice mental habit, but there it is.Heres another example: I had a job once where my boss was in the habit of sending vaguely-worded emails every time he wanted to talk:When you get a chance, stop by my office. We need to talk about something.Without fail, my self-talk in response to these emails was:Oh man, what did I do?In the end, it usually had nothing to do with me screwing up. But that little script was my default mental reaction to those emails.Im sure you can think of lots of these little bits of negative self-talk in your own life.Narrative HabitsThe English major in me likes to think about these mental habits as a form of narrative.Our lives are like a story constantly unfolding in front of us. And we are constantly narrative self-talk in your own life.Narrative HabitsThe English major in me likes to think about these mental habits as a form of narrative.Our lives are like a story constantly unfolding in front of us. happening in the plot, we talk to ourselves in our lives, what it means, what it means and habit formation that physical behaviors are. That is, we can learn to talk to ourselves in specific ways just like we can learn to tie our shoes or say please and thank you. On its own, this is a neat idea, but the idea of mental habits has profound practical implications for our lives, specifically, how we feel emotionally. All the FeelsAs the Stoics have been preaching for 2,000 years, events themselves dont cause us suffering, its the way we think about events that influences how we feel. And thanks to some good science over the past 50 years or so, weve basically confirmed this and solidified it in whats knows as Cognitive Mediation Theory. Feel free to read up on the theory using the above link, but it all boils down to this: Events + Thoughts = Emotions. Our emotions are always mediated by some form of cognition or thinking. And often the cognition thats mediate emotions so what? If our thoughts determine how we feel, that means how we habitually think will determine how we habitually feel.Let that sink in for a minute because its arguably one of the most important ideas in all of psychology. The practical implication is that if we want to change how we feel, we must learn how to change how we feel, we must learn how to change how we think. Specifically, we need to learn how to change how we feel, we must learn how to change how we feel to learn how to change how to learn how to change how to change how we feel to ourselves if we want to feel better on a regular basis. Of course, theres more to human suffering and mental health than our habits of talking to ourselves. But our mental health than our habits of talking to ourselves. But our mental health than our habits of talking to ourselves. genetic code).Which is why I usually sum up my job by saying that I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits.Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits.Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help people identify and unlearn problematic mental habits. Or maybe better: I help that lead to us feeling badly on a regular basis. In psychology, we call them Cognitive Distortions because theyre usually unrealistic or inaccurate explanations for whats going on in our lives that lead to unnecessarily negative distortions. These arent totally cut and dry categories; rather, theyre meant to be helpful labels for a more general pattern of mis-explaining reality in our self-talk, understand that theyre not completely true. The problem is the habit of saying them to ourselves. Merely understanding that we have inaccurate self-talk isnt enoughas well discuss, its the habit of regularly catching ourselves in the act of this inaccurate self-talk that matters. Mind Reading is assuming we understand what other people are thinking without any real evidence. We imagine whats going on in someone elses head, but we do it in a way thats biased and inaccurate. At its core, Mind Reading is a failure of imagination we often only imagine the negative without exploring many different possibilities, some of which are bound to be neutral or even positive. During a presentation were giving we notice the boss looking at her phone the whole time, so we assume in our minds: Shes so bored. I knew I shouldnt have volunteered for this. Our spouse doesnt immediately say hello when we get home from work, so we assume: He must be upset with me for something. Overgeneralization is the habit of telling ourselves that a negative event is bound to continue happening in the future. When we overgeneralize, we make predictions about the future based on isolated pieces of evidence from the present. After being told that our flight was delayed, we comment in our mind: Typical! My flights are always delayed.MagnificationMagnification is when we take our own errors or flaws and exaggerate them. Often magnification takes the form of catastrophizing when we take small negative events and turn them into disasters in our minds. After mistaking someones name at a cocktail party, we imagine: Great, now they regoing to think Im not interested in them and dont care about anyone but myself. After feeling a small heart palpitation, we think: Is something wrong with my heart? Am I having a heart attack? I need to get to the ER now! Minimization is the mirror image of Magnification and involves being dismissive of our strengths and positive qualities. When we minimize, it often keeps us in a cycle of feeling inferior because we never allow ourselves: Yeah, I got an A, but I missed the easiest question on the whole exam. After a congratulatory remark from our spouse after helping our child, we say to ourselves: They probably would have figured it out on their own. Emotional Reasoning Emotional reasoning is the habit of making decisions based on how we feel rather than what we value. When we use our emotions and feelings as evidence for what we should or shouldn't do, we end up spending all our time running away from discomfort rather than toward the things we really value. Depression and procrastination are common results of this.Im not going to go to the gym this evening; I just dont feel it.If only I felt more motivated I could get ahead of my studying and be able to enjoy vacation guilt-free.Black and White ThinkingBlack and white thinking is the tendency to evaluate things exclusively in terms of extreme categories. It shows up most commonly when we evaluate our own personal qualities and characteristics this way. Black and white thinking is a problem because it sets us up for chronic disappointment. When our expectations are consistently exaggerated, we never meet them and then always feel bad about ourselves. After getting a B- on an exam, we mutter to ourselves: Im such an idiot. Thinking back on a recent date that seemed to go badly, we think: Ugh Im so awkward! Personalization Personalization involves assuming excessive amounts of responsibility, especially for things that are mostly or entirely outside our control. An exaggerated sense of responsibility leads to excessive attempts at control, which in turn leads to chronic stress and anxiety. After our child makes a crucial mistake at the end of a basketball game, we think to ourselves: If only I had practiced with her yesterday when she asked me to, she would have made that shot! When a supervisor points out an area for improvement in our work, we assume: Im such a screw-up. Why cant I just do things right! Fortune TellingFortune TellingFortune Telling is the mental habit of predicting what will happen. Like Overgeneralization, Fortune Telling is a failure of imaginative flexibility, and it often leads to a state of hyperarousal and anxiety. After a date that finished quickly, we say to ourselves: Theres no way theyre going to accept our proposal (Fortune Telling).Labeling is the habit of describing ourselves or others in one extreme way, usually negatively. Because people and their sense of self (including our own) are highly complex and ever-changing, Labeling is always an inaccurate oversimplification. After finishing a 5K with a slow time, we tell ourselves: Im a loser. After a fight with our spouse, we tell ourselves: Hes such jerk. Should Statements Should Statements are a kind of self-talk we use to try and motivate ourselves by always telling ourselves what we should not do. The problem is, most of lifes decisions are not obvious cut and try choices they involve ambiguity, uncertainty, and inherent risk. When were in the habit of using Should Statements, we set up a false expectation that we should have more certainty than we do. This can lead to chronic frustration, anxiety, and resentment. After missing an important call from our boss, we tell ourselves: I should have known he was going to call about the Johnson account this evening. I just have to nail this performance! we tell ourselves before going on stage. Changing our habitual ways of thinking and talking to ourselves can be a huge undertaking, especially if the habits are long-standing and pretty firmly entrenched. But there are some simple steps we can all take to build better habits of self-talk: Look for specific cognitive distortions in other peoples speech. Of course, the idea is to change ourselves not other people. But, it can often be easier to identify examples of negative self-talk in other speech), we can more readily start to see them in our own thinking and self-talk. Change your (inner) tone of voice. We all know that the way someone says something to us often affects how we feel at least as much as what they say (think about sarcasm). The same thing applies to the way you talk to yourself. Are you harsh, judgmental, and sarcastic with yourself? What would it look like if you were more gentle, empathetic, and straightforward in the way you talked to yourself? Validate your feelings instead of analyzing them. Many of us feel the discomfort or pain of an emotion and our gut reaction is to start talking to ourselves about those feelings and what they mean. Instead, try to simply observe and notice these feelings. When we instantly rush in to fix or solve our feelings with a bunch of self-talk, we train our brain to think of these feelings as problems. Mindfulness can help you get better at this. Be intentional, not habitual, with your self-criticism. There's nothing wrong with self-criticism. standard. But youll be much more likely to do this productively (and accurately) if its intentional and deliberate rather than a gut reaction. Instead of instantly passing judgment on yourself in the moment, schedule a time to reflect on a perceived mistake or flaw intentionally, maybe by journaling about it or talking it over with someone you trust.UPDATE: I recently published an entire guide dedicated to changing negative thinking, which you can read here:Cognitive Restructuring: The Complete Guide to Changing Negative ThinkingOr Try TherapyIf you feel like your self-talk and habits of thought are really interfering with your life in a significant and prolonged way, consider working with a therapist. Therapy or counseling is often the most powerful and efficient way to work on problems of self-talk. Specifically, cognitive behavior that are interfering with their lives. And by working with a therapist (many CBT therapists are actually more like coaches than traditional therapists), you can work on undoing these habits with an expert guide who can provide structure, accountability, clarification, and encouragement. Here are the best places to find a qualified cognitive behavioral therapist in your local area: If you go through those resources and are still stuck, heres a shameless plug for my own book. It walks even complete therapy beginners step-by-step through the process of finding a good therapist: Find Your Therapy Often the best way to change how we feel on a regular basis is to change how we think. Specifically, we can learn to change how we talk to ourselves (self-talk). By learning to identify the ways we consistently misinterpret events in our lives (Cognitive Distortions), we can begin to think more realistically and helpfully about even the most difficult of circumstances. This tends to have beneficial effects on our mood and outlook in the long run. Changing our thoughts wont change reality, but it just might change how you feel about it. What to Read NextIf you enjoyed this article, you might also like: Everyone I have met in my life wants unlimited opportunities, better relationships, a healthy body, a forgiving heart, a sharp mind, amazing skills, and financial security. If we all want these things, why cant we accomplish them? The answer is simple: negative self talk. The reason why many of us cant get there is because we have a critical inner voice is trying to convince us that we are not smart enough, or good enough to do what we want to do in life. This invisible enemy inhibits us from pursuing the life we deserve, leading to anxiety, depression, and a higher stress level. If we want to reach our potential and improve our mental health, we have to take control of this inner voice and learn how to tame it and transform it into a positive force. It is important for us to learn more about this negative self talk before we can tame it to become a helpful positive force. Lets start with the 4 different types of negative self-talk. Types self-talk. Types of negative self-talk. Types se three pounds this week. You focus on this, and you ignore that you have lost 20 pounds this month. PersonalizingYou always blame yourself for everything. For example, you hear that your soccer practice got canceled, and you assume that it is canceled because no one wanted to be around you. CatastrophizingYou always expect the worst. For example, you have a flat tire in the morning, and you automatically assume the rest of yourself. Am I filtering the rest of yourself. Am I filtering the rest of yourself. Am I filtering the rest of yourself. positive out of this issue?Am I blaming myself for something that I have no control over?Am I expecting the worst of this?Am I seeing things as black and consider what you can do to turn your thinking from negative to positive. It is important to take control of these thoughts before they become beliefs. A belief is something that you are certain about. The sooner you address these negative self TalkIt is clear that negative self TalkIt is clear that negative self TalkIt is clear that negative self talk hinders your progress and prevents you from living the life that you deserve. Here are three methods you can use daily to overcome this innate habit.1. Respond to Your Inner VoiceIn a recent HBR article, Erica Ariel Fox stated that the toughest conversations any of us can have are the ones that we have with ourselves. She mentions a story about Dominique, a high performing executive who has great self-confidence but a critical inner voice. Dominique commands everyones attention and respect, but not her own.Dominique has a serious problem when she talks to her captivated audience. She has an inner voice will impact her performance if she does not learn how to turn it to positive self talk. It is clear that Dominique is filtering out all of her positive abilities and polarizing the situation. She has a lot of good things to offer, and she is not a fraud. So, the author gives her one enormous piece of advice: Do not ignore your inner voice, respond to it. Many executives do not shy away from having hard conversations with others, but they avoid having difficult conversations with themselves. She advises people not to ignore their negative self-talk, but to respond to it. If your inner voice says, That was terrible parenting, you can respond to it. If your inner voice says, That was terrible parenting, you can respond with, Im not a perfect parent, and Im okay with it. This will make you feel awkward at first, but it gets easier with time. Instead of ignoring your negative self talk, try learning to identify and respond to it kindly. Practice positive self-talk every day. Do not allow negative self-talk to rob your best friend. We often say things to ourselves that are unkind, unfounded, and untrue. When you are passed over for a promotion, be kind to yourself. When you forget to drop your clothes at the dry cleaner, be kind to yourself. We all make mistakes, we are all imperfect, we all have bad days, but it does not make us bad people. When Jon Gordon was 29 years old, he was facing a divorce. His wife was tired of his negativity. He made a decision to change. He developed a positive mindset, and he started to drown out negative thoughts with positive words. This approach saved his marriage and changed his life. He encourages his readers to be kind to themselves and to be positive. Gordon understands that being negative will guarantee your failure and destroy your relationships. If your friends cancel a dinner plan, dont assume that no one wants to be around you. Stop personalizing events, and start framing it correctly. Your friends canceled your planned dinner because they are busy, and it has nothing to do with you. Always choose to be kind to yourself. If you are having a hard time being kind to yourself, surround yourself with positive, kind people who are willing to support you and provide you with immediate kind feedback when you start having negative thoughts. Extensive research shows that positive and provide you with immediate kind feedback when you start having negative thoughts. Be PerfectIf your goal is to be perfect, you will fail. Do not expect perfection. No one is perfection. The key to a positive mindset is progress and not perfection. If you expect perfection. If you expect perfection. The key to a positive mindset is progress and not perfect perfection. unrealistic goal. Every time you have an argument with someone, you will keep replaying the conversations in your head over and over. These conversations will be negative self talk, stop trying to be perfect. Most perfectionists keep comparing themselves to other people. This habit is an official invitation to your negative self talk to reenter your mind again. Do not compare yourself to anyone. You will always find others who are better off than you. Instead, focus on being grateful for the great things that you have. Antoine de Saint-Exupery expressed this in his bestselling book Airmans Odyssey: Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away. Be content of what you have, and stop worrying about comparing yourself to others. Always be grateful for. If you want some inspiration about what to be grateful for every day, here they are: 60 Things To Be Thankful For In LifeThe Bottom LineNext time you catch yourself being negative, do not ignore your inner voice. Respond to it kindly, and give up the need to be perfect. Youve got this! More Tips for Living a Positive LifeFeatured photo credit: Christopher Campbell via unsplash.com

What are some examples of negative self talk. What is negative self talk. Polarizing self talk.