



New Idea
Monday 14/12/2020
 Page: 66
 Section: General News
 Region: National, AU
 Circulation: 211855
 Type: Magazines Lifestyle
 Size: 2,123.00 sq.cms.



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HOW THE WORDS WE USE TOWARDS OURSELVES AFFECT OUR WELLBEING

CHANGING self-talk

Being asked how you talk to yourself might seem a little 'loopy', but it's actually extremely important to have a constructive, supportive self-dialogue.

Dr John Demartini, human behaviour specialist and founder of the Demartini Institute, reveals how negative or self-depreciative dialogue can be detrimental to your confidence, resilience and self-esteem. And, of course, how you can identify it and improve it.

SO, WHAT IS SELF-TALK?

Your self-talk is the internal dialogue that you have with yourself throughout the day and night.

"For example, if you miss a deadline that you or others may have imposed and think, 'I'm so disorganised' – that's self-talk," says Dr Demartini.

"Your self-talk is not necessarily 'good' or 'bad' – it's simply a way of keeping you accountable to living in alignment with your true highest values and offers you important feedback. It can make you

aware of whether or not you're living your life on your own terms and living out your highest-priority actions that are most meaningful and productive for you and those you care about most – as opposed to living out lower-priority actions in subordination to others."

WHAT HAPPENS IF SOMEONE'S SELF-TALK BECOMES DESTRUCTIVE?

When you begin to put pressure on yourself to live up to what others are



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You can help your loved ones improve their self-talk by getting them to share what their values are.



doing or achieving, is when you start damaging your self-esteem.

"Your self-talk can become self-depreciative the moment you play the underdog to someone you put on a pedestal, and in turn minimise yourself to, and thereby live inauthentically in front of," Dr Demartini explains.

"For example, a friend who you perceive to be more wealthy, attractive or successful than you could be one of these people you put on a pedestal, then minimise yourself in comparison and begin self-depreciative

self-talk as a result of the comparison."

He also says that phrases like "I should have done", "I ought to be doing", "I'm supposed to have done", "I have to do", and "I must" are all examples that show you've given power to someone else inside your head.

However, it's not just your own self-worth you're breaking down by doing this, it can also affect the way you view said person you're comparing yourself to.

"This comparison can lead to a feeling of being inauthentic and of not measuring up to the standard that you've allowed them through your skewed perceptions," says Dr Demartini. "Over time, you can also start to resent those who you've put on a pedestal. Once you start injecting their values into your life, your self-talk suddenly reveals the internal conflict between what you think you should be doing (their values) and what you actually would love to be doing."

HOW DO YOU TRANSFORM YOUR SELF-TALK?

It's possible to refine the way you talk to and view yourself into something clear, inspired and meaningful.

"The primary action to take to transform your internal dialogue is to begin prioritising your day and filling it with the most inspiring and productive actions you can envision that truly align with your highest

SIMPLE SELF-TALK Swaps

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW YOU CAN TURN YOUR TOXIC SELF-TALK INTO SOMETHING MORE PRODUCTIVE



• INSTEAD OF "I SHOULD", IT WILL BECOME "I WOULD LOVE TO DO".

• INSTEAD OF "I MUST", IT WILL BECOME "I CHOOSE TO".

• INSTEAD OF "I OUGHT TO", IT WILL BECOME "I DESIRE TO".

values and goals," says Dr Demartini.

"If you don't fill your day with actions that inspire you, it will automatically become filled with uninspiring distractions that devalue you. Instead of comparing yourself to others that you might admire, begin comparing your own daily actions to your own highest value-based objectives. Compare yourself to your own mission and vision, not someone else's."

WHAT IF YOU NOTICE A LOVED ONE HAS SELF-DEPRECIATIVE SELF-TALK?

First, help them identify what their highest values and goals are.

"Determine what they truly want to be doing or fulfilling, because it will help them more clearly define their priorities and live more authentically, and also help them fulfil their most meaningful higher goals," Dr Demartini explains.

"Help them become aware of their 'shoulds', 'ought tos' and 'supposed tos', and help them discover how they are trying to live by others' values and self-deprecating themselves in turn."