

The Five Levels of Self-Talk

Live by active intent-not passive acceptance

Self-talk paints new internal pictures of ourselves as we would *like* to be. Self-talk is a way to override past negative programming by erasing or replacing the negative things we tell ourselves with positive and conscious new thinking. The subconscious is waiting for directions and will obey the directions you give it.

Level I—Harmful Self-talk

These are thoughts about ourselves that are negative. We see something we don't like and we think negatively about it and accept it. "I can't.....If only I could.....I wish I could but I can't" etc. Level I is the most used form of self-talk and it works against us. Remember, the unconscious mind is listening for instructions.

Level II—Recognizing the Need to Change

"I need to.... I ought to.... I should....." This form of self-talk recognizes a problem but it does not create a solution. This thinking puts us back on Level I if we don't make a change. If we completed the sentences that we are thinking, such as, "I need to get more organized....But I'm not" we have another negative thought.

Level III—Decision To Change

This level of thinking works *for* you. You recognize a need to change but you also make a decision to do something about it. You state this decision in the present tense—as though the change had already happened. Example: You want to quit smoking, so you think and say, "I don't smoke, I have no desire to smoke" or you want to be a more organized person, so you say and think, "I am an organized person".

What you are doing is *reprogramming* your subconscious. Your subconscious will automatically react by seeing to it that you do not smoke or that you organize yourself. The subconscious now has new directions. The subconscious will believe anything you tell it if you tell it long enough and often enough and strongly enough. For Negative or Positive.

Your subconscious mind will create a new picture of you in the control center of your brain.

Level IV—The Better You

This level of thinking is the most effective, needed the most and the least used. “I am organized...I have a good memory”. On this level we deal with problems in a whole new way that is productive and self-activating.

Level I and II say, “I can never remember names”

Level IV says, “I have a great memory, I can remember any name.”

Level IV replaces Levels I and II with positive self-talk. We need to use this level of thinking the most and Level I the least. Level IV thinking challenges us to do battle with our fears and doubts. It also fills our mind with self-belief, self-respect and creates *positive programming*.

Level V—Universal Affirmation

Level V helps us to have a more universal acceptance of ourselves and others. We can feel one with the universe, believing that we matter and that we have meaning in our lives. We rise above the worldly, mundane things of life and understand the power we have to change ourselves.

An affirmation of ourself is always in our mind and heart. What we believe about ourself, we become—so, “I choose to believe the best about myself. I choose my thoughts. **No thought at anytime can dwell in my mind without my permission.**”

I focus on those things I can control. If I can't affect it or direct it, I accept it.

Helmstetter, Shad, (1982). *What to say when you talk to yourself*. Scottsdale, AZ: Grindle Press.