

Self-Talk

The Secret Behind Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence



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Self-Talk – The Secret Behind Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

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Self-Talk – The Secret Behind Self-Esteem and Self-Confidence

Wyatt's Coaching Notes

Self-Talk – Power of Our Thoughts and Words

Message from Wyatt the Wise Wizard!

Hey Kids, Wyatt here!

Today, we are going to talk about one of the most important skills for creating strong self-esteem, powerful self-confidence, and achieving our goals. It's called self-talk, and it's really cool stuff.

Let's get started with an activity that you can either do with your parent or on your own. Then, we will read the story "Choosing Your BFF (Best Friend Forever)" and watch as Trudy learns how to choose her own BFF!

Adventure with my friends!
Wyatt



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Lesson 1: Observing your Own Self-Talk

Activity

Material:

Activity can be done verbally or written¹.

Exercise:

For each scenario imagine you are in the situation. Notice what you are thinking. Write down what you would be thinking right before this happens (there is not right or wrong answer).

1. You are sitting at your desk and the teacher is handing out a math test. What are you thinking to yourself?
2. You are standing at the base of a 20' diving board about to climb up. What are you thinking to yourself?
3. You are sitting at your desk and it is almost your turn to give a presentation to the class. What are you thinking to yourself?

¹ If you are working with more than one child and they plan to answer the questions verbally, you may want to step them through the questions one at a time privately to get a better understanding of their current self-talk without peer influence.



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4. You are looking in the mirror before heading to school. What are you thinking to yourself?

5. You break a glass in the kitchen. What are you thinking to yourself?

6. You go to the park and you don't know any of the kids who are already playing there. What are you thinking to yourself?



Story – Choosing Your BFF (Best Friend Forever)

It was the big day! Cheerleading tryouts, history test, and the announcement of the art contest winner all in one day!

Trudy the Tortoise woke up and her stomach was in knots. The events of the day were the first thing that popped into her mind.

“Maybe I shouldn’t be trying out for cheerleading. I really can’t jump very high, and I’m not as bouncy as the rabbits,” mumbled Trudy to herself. “I bet it’s not too late to back out.”

She put on her dress and looked in the mirror. *Ugh*, she thought. *I really need to find some new clothes.* She picked at her hair and frowned. *Well, I probably won’t be going up on stage for the art contest anyway. Peter and Julie’s pictures were much better than mine.*

Trudy moped to her desk, picked up her books and looked at the facts for the test that day. *Ugh*, she thought to herself. *I’m no good at history.*

She started to head downstairs for breakfast when, suddenly, POOF! Wyatt the Wise Wizard appeared.

“Wyatt! What are you doing here?” asked Trudy.



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“Sensed some major dragons and wanted to check in with you,” answered Wyatt.

“I don’t see any dragons, and I’m not feeling very grungy,” said Trudy.
“What’s going on?”

“Ahhh, I was afraid of that,” answered Wyatt.

“Afraid of what?” asked Trudy.

“That you didn’t even realize the dragons were here!” answered Wyatt very concerned. “You see, you’ve been using negative self-talk for so long that it’s a habit. You didn’t even realize you were doing it.”

“Please tell me more,” said Trudy. “And what’s self-talk? I’m a bit confused.”

“Definitely,” said Wyatt. He pointed his finger towards the ceiling and two clouds appeared. In one cloud, Trudy saw her best friend Nicki. In the other cloud she saw her other best friend Pam. Nicki looked directly at Trudy and began to speak.

“Why did you wear that dress? It doesn’t look very good on you. You really should wear your hair differently. Cheerleading tryouts are today. I don’t know why you are even trying out. You’re not going to make the team. Everyone knows tortoises can’t jump – you’re too heavy. And forget about passing that test, you’re not good at history, and your writing is terrible. Oh, and that art project you submitted for the competition – not



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good enough. Peter and Julie drew much better pictures. Yours will never win.”

Trudy looked a bit surprised. She couldn’t believe what Nicki was saying. “How could my best friend talk to me that way?” she asked Wyatt.

Then Pam began to speak, “Trudy, that’s a beautiful dress. It really makes your eyes look green. Good luck at cheerleading tryouts. I know you’re going to do great. Remember that tortoises make a great base for the pyramids, and you have such happy energy. Thank you for studying with me last night, we’re both going to ace that history test. Oh, and that art project you submitted for the competition – beautiful. I could feel the calm of the ocean just by looking at it. I bet you feel really proud of that picture. Good luck today – I can’t wait to see you up on stage.”

Whew, thought Trudy. *That’s more like it.*

“Now,” said Wyatt. “Which friend would you want to be around? Negative Nicki, or Positive Pam?”

“Duh, I want to be around Pam. I don’t know why Nicki was talking to me that way,” answered Trudy.

“She was talking to you that way because that is the way you talk to yourself!” explained Wyatt.

“What?” asked Trudy. “I don’t talk to myself.”



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“Ah, but you do. In fact, all of us do all of the time, either through our thoughts or by the words we speak,” shared Wyatt. “It’s called ‘self-talk.’”

“Wow, I didn’t even realize that,” said Trudy.

“Many people don’t,” shared Wyatt. “And, did you know that most people talk to themselves with negative self-talk instead of positive self-talk? That would be like choosing to be around Negative Nicki all of the time – choosing to be around someone who is always finding something wrong with you and tearing you down! Can you imagine that? Yet most people put themselves down every day.”

“I had no idea. What can I do about it?” asked Trudy.

“Let’s talk about self-talk,” answered Wyatt. “So, self-talk is what we say to ourselves either with our words or through our thoughts. There are two types of self-talk, positive self-talk and negative self-talk. Positive self-talk ‘builds us up’ and makes us feel good about ourselves. Saying things like ‘I can do this’ or ‘I’m going to do great’ are examples of positive self-talk.”

“You mean like if I tell myself I’m going to do great at cheerleading tryouts?” asked Trudy.

“Exactly,” said Wyatt. “Negative self-talk tends to ‘bring us down’. Saying things like ‘I can’t do this’ or ‘this is too hard’ are examples of negative self-talk. Negative self-talk creates bad energy and feelings of fear and self-doubt. Negative self-talk creates major grungies.”



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“Oh... like when I told myself I probably wouldn't be going up on stage anyway,” confirmed Trudy.

“You got it,” said Wyatt. “You are the most important person in your life, and it is your job to lift yourself up and make yourself feel good. *What you say to yourself is more important than what anyone else says to you. As a leader of your own life, you have the power to choose what you say to yourself!*

“With positive self-talk, you become your own BFF – best friend forever!”

“That's cool. I want to be my own BFF,” exclaimed Trudy with excitement. “One thing I don't get, how does self-talk work?”

“Ah, that was next,” shared Wyatt. “You see your self-talk programs your mind – both your conscious mind and your subconscious mind to create what you say. If you say you won't do well on something, your mind will work to create that. If you say you will do well on something, your mind will work to create that too. Each time you state what you want, you build neural pathways and trigger your RAS to make it happen. It's important to make sure your mind is working FOR you and not against you!”

“Wow, that makes sense. I knew that visualization and affirmations did that, but I didn't realize that self-talk did that too!” said Trudy.

“Yes,” answered Wyatt. “Your words and your thoughts can make you feel great and make you feel powerful, or they can create the grungies. It's up to *you* to choose what you want.”



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“I want to be my own BFF!” said Trudy. “How do I create positive self-talk?”

“There are two steps,” answered Wyatt. “First is to notice your current self-talk – just pay attention. Ask yourself, is this thought helping me? If you hear negative self-talk, then gently shift to power talk – which is just positive self-talk.

“Second, you can have positive self-talk on purpose. Practice saying positive messages to yourself throughout the day. Start first thing in the morning when you look in the mirror, then continue throughout the day. Whenever you are about to do something, send yourself a positive message. Each time you look in the mirror, send yourself a positive message. Right before you go to bed, send yourself a positive message and set your goal for the next day.”

“That sounds cool!” said Trudy. “I’m going to work on this every day! Thank you so much for teaching me this!”

“You are quite welcome,” answered Wyatt with a wink.

“You’re my BFF Wyatt, and now I am my own BFF too!” smiled Trudy

And POOF, Wyatt was gone!

The End



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Activity – Let's Talk

Directions

Kids, write your answers to the questions below or discuss with a grownup! See Appendix A for answers.

Discussion Questions About the Story

1. Why did Wyatt visit Trudy?
2. Why did Trudy not realize she was using negative self-talk?
3. Why did Wyatt have Nicki talk to Trudy in such a harsh way?
4. What is self-talk?
5. What are two types of self-talk?



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6. How often do we use self-talk?

7. How does self-talk work?

8. How do you create positive self-talk?

9. Who is your BFF?



Wyatt's Coaching Notes Continued



Message from Wyatt the Wise Wizard!

Hey Kids,

Wow, Trudy really learned an important skill! Self-talk is critical for helping us build positive self-esteem and powerful self-confidence! I wanted to go into a little more detail about how to power shift when you experience negative self-talk and how to create positive self-talk throughout the day.

Shifting Negative Self-Talk!

There are two steps for shifting negative self-talk. First, you have to notice it! That means to listen to what you are saying to yourself and to the thoughts that you are thinking – hear yourself.

Listen to what you say to yourself in the mirror. Listen to what you say to yourself when you are about to meet someone new. Listen to what you say to yourself when you are about to do something that makes you nervous like take a test or stand in front of your class.

The grungies are a sign of negative self-talk!

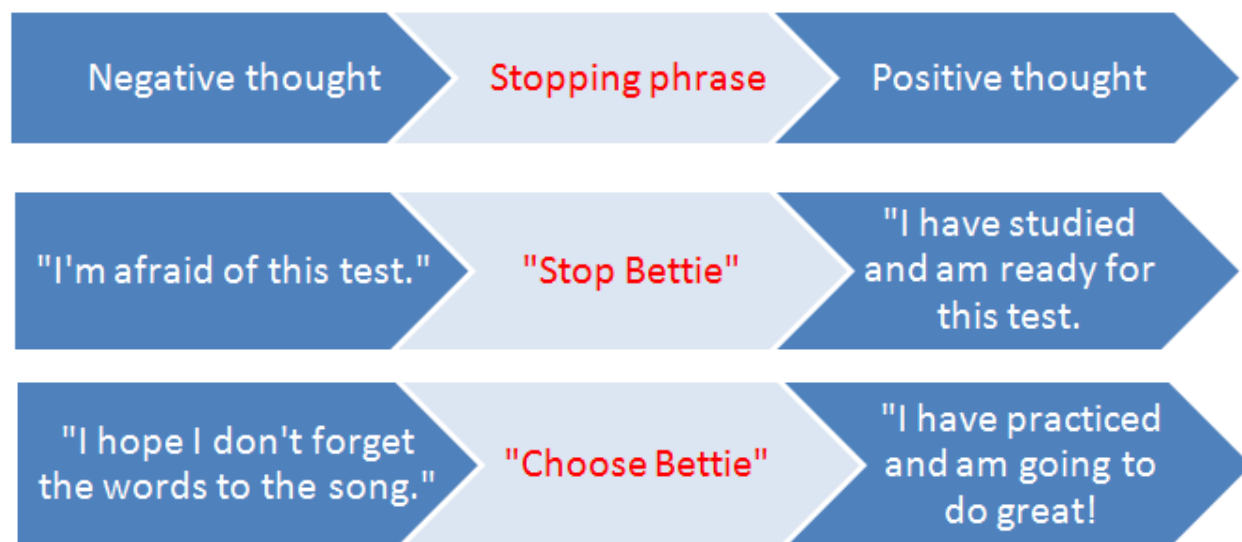
Most important is to listen to yourself when you're feeling the grungies! What are you thinking about? What is making you feel sad, afraid, angry, depressed, guilty, lonely, etc.? The grungies are often a sign of negative self-talk.



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Second, stop and shift! Stop and shift means to stop the grungy talk and shift to power talk.

When you hear negative self-talk, stop it immediately. A cool trick is to use a “stopping phrase” or a “stopping action”. A “stopping phrase” or “stopping action” is a flag to let you know to stop your negative thoughts so you can shift to a positive thought. Here are some examples of a “stopping phrase”:

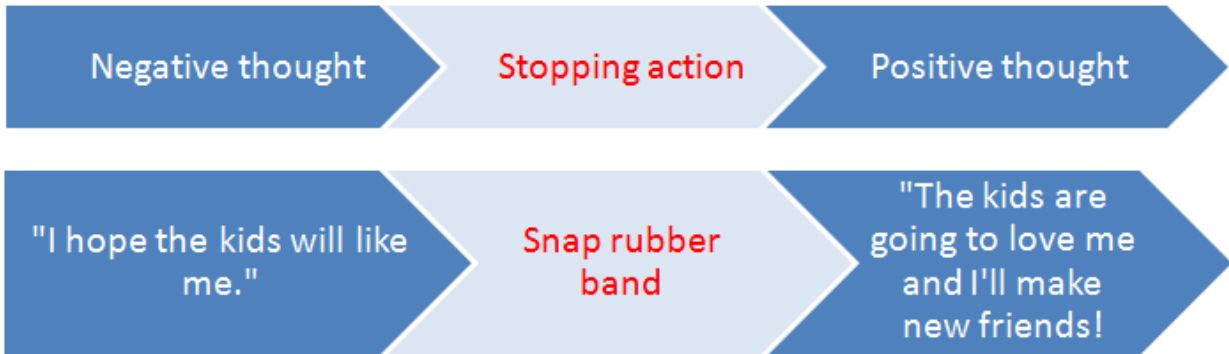


You can also make up your own stopping phrase.

Another trick you can do is to use a “stopping action” as a reminder before shifting to a positive thought. Examples of “stopping actions” may include snapping your fingers, touching your heart, or snapping a rubber band worn on your wrist. For example:



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You can also make up your own stopping action.

Here's the key, if you notice grungy self-talk, use your stopping phrase and then gently power shift into positive self-talk. The important thing is, don't beat yourself up for having negative self-talk – "self-beat up" only creates more negatives thoughts! Just change your thinking.



Wyatt's Wrap Up

Message from Wyatt the Wise Wizard!

Hey Kids,

I hope you can see just how powerful self-talk is! It is probably one of the most important tools for creating positive self-esteem and powerful self-confidence.

There are three very important activities included in this skill book. The first gives you an opportunity to practice shifting grungy talk to power talk. Take time to do this activity and get some practice!

The second activity gives you a chance to create a mirror mantra. A mirror mantra is a short positive statement to say to yourself every time you see your reflection in the mirror! This is a great way to start building a habit of positive self-talk.

The third activity is a self-talk journal. Keeping a self-talk journal for a week is a great way to notice what types of thoughts and messages you say to yourself.

Also, there are a couple of key points I want you to remember:

1. Always be aware of what you say to yourself through your thoughts and your words.



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2. If you notice grungy talk, gently shift to power talk. There is no need for “self-beat up” or frustration if you spot negative self-talk, just gently shift.
3. Practice your mirror mantra every day - many times a day!
4. What you say to yourself is more important than what anyone else says to you.
Speak wisely!

Remember to do your Wise in Fives!

Adventure well my friends!
Wyatt



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Activity – Let's Practice *Power Shifting Negative Self-Talk*

Directions: For this activity, read the situation and the Negative Nicki. Then, practice power shifting to power talk! Practice using a stopping phrase or stopping action. *See sample answers in Appendix B.*

Situation	Negative Self-talk	Positive Self-talk
Looking in the mirror	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Yuck. My hair is a mess and my nose is crooked”.• “Fix this. Fix that.”	
Facing a big change	“I don’t think I can.”	
Being called “stupid” by the class bully	“Maybe he’s right.”	
Making a mistake	“I messed up. I’m such a dork. I’m not going to try that again.”	
Feeling Fear	“I’m too afraid. I’m not going to do it.”	



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Facing a hard task	“That’s too hard. I’m not sure I can handle it.”
Facing a new opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I’m too old/young/heavy/tall/...” • “I don’t have enough experience...”
Taking a test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I hope I don’t fail.” • “I’m no good at multiple choice tests.”
Completing a project	“I finished, but don’t think it’s good enough to win”
Handling obstacles/circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I don’t play as well in the cold.” • “I don’t have enough money. I can’t go.”
Receiving a report card with four “A”s and one “C”	“I got a C. That’s going to kill my average.”



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Activity – Mirror Mantra

Materials: Mirror

Purpose: Develop a habit of positive self-talk when you look in the mirror.

Directions: Every time you look in the mirror, whether it's getting ready in the morning, washing your hands, styling your hair, etc. is a wonderful time to send positive self-talk messages to yourself.

We recommend creating one or more “mirror mantras” that you can use whenever you see your reflection. A mantra is a word or short phrase used to communicate a message to yourself.

Examples of mantras include:

“You rock!”
“Go for it!”
“You’re awesome!”
“You’re a master hitter!”

“Hello, beautiful!”
“Ace that test!”
“I love you!”

The purpose of creating a mantra is to build a habit of positive self-talk every time you look in the mirror. It is important to pick a mantra that “speaks to you”. When you hear it, it makes you feel great!

Once you’ve selected your mantras, practice saying them over and over – feeling the positive energy flowing through your body! Every time you see a mirror is an opportunity to say your mantra. Remember that what you say to yourself is more important than what anyone else says to you!



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Activity – Self-Talk Journal

Materials: Journal

Purpose: Track your self-talk.

Directions: Keep a self-talk journal for one week. Jot down any negative self-talk you hear, and power shift the statement into something that supports you. If you hear yourself saying the same negative self-talk over and over, develop a mantra or affirmation to reprogram that negative self-talk.

What you say to yourself is more important than what anyone else says to you.

Speak wisely 😊



Appendix A

Answers to Let's Talk

1. Why did Wyatt visit Trudy?

He sensed the dragons in her room.

2. Why did Trudy not realize she was using negative self-talk?

It had become such a habit that she didn't even realize she was doing it.

3. Why did Wyatt have Nicki talk to Trudy in such a harsh way?

So that Nicki could hear how she was talking to herself.

4. What is self-talk?

What you say to yourself in your thoughts and words.

5. What are two types of self-talk?

Negative self-talk (grungy talk) and positive self-talk (power talk)

6. How often do we use self-talk?

All of the time!

7. How does self-talk work?

Programs you conscious and subconscious mind to create what you say.

8. How do you create positive self-talk?

1. Notice your self-talk. If you hear grungy talk then gently shift to power talk.



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2. Use positive self-talk on purpose. When you wake up in the morning, every time you look in the mirror, before you do an activity, and before you go to bed.

9. Who is your BFF?

I am!



Appendix B

Answers to Let's Practice – Power Shifting Negative Self-Talk

Situation	Negative Self-talk	Positive Self-talk
Looking in the mirror	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Yuck. My hair is a mess and my nose is crooked”. • “Fix this. Fix that.” 	<i>“You’re beautiful! You’re awesome! You rock!”</i>
Facing a big change	“I don’t think I can.”	<i>“I know I can.”</i>
Being called “stupid” by the class bully	“Maybe he’s right.”	<i>“That’s not true. He’s just being mean.”</i>
Making a mistake	“I messed up. I’m such a dork. I’m not going to try that again.”	<i>“I messed up. I’ll apologize, fix it, learn from it, and let it go.”</i>
Feeling Fear	“I’m too afraid. I’m not going to do it.”	<i>“I’m afraid but I’m going to do it anyway.”</i>
Facing a hard task	“That’s too hard. I’m not sure I can handle it.”	<i>“Looks like a challenge. Let’s go!”</i>
Facing a new opportunity	• “I’m too	<i>“Go for it!”</i>



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	<p>old/young/heavy/tall/..."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I don't have enough experience..." 	
Taking a test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I hope I don't fail." • "I'm no good at multiple choice tests." 	"I know the material and I will do well on this test."
Completing a project	"I finished, but don't think it's good enough to win"	"I did a great job and have a good chance to win!"
Handling obstacles/circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I don't play as well in the cold." • "I don't have enough money. I can't go." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "With the right gear, I will play great, even with the freezing temperature." • "I'll find a way to earn money so I can go."
Receiving a report card with four "A"s and one "C"	"I got a C. That's going to kill my average."	"Wow. I got four A's. Great job! By focusing more on my science labs, I'll be able to bring the low grade up to an 'A' as well!"