



Listening to Your Own Self-Talk

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Published

December 1st, 2008

I was sitting in the Cypress Club one day and noticed that my usually calm state was agitated. It took a few minutes to realize that the music coming from the sound system was not only loud but not the usual peaceful "elevator style" that could bring calm to any environment.

I noticed that my body was reacting to the sound. The hair on the back of my neck was standing and I had a strong feeling of tightness in my arms and shoulders. At first I thought that perhaps I should just ask the server to change the channel and then realized that like life, there are external things that can be irritating but not within our power to change.

As I sat there, I started thinking about what I could change and how I would do that. The result of this was my realization that the only thing that I could control was my thoughts and immediately began giving myself internal messages of calm. Using self-talk that stated what I wanted had immediate results. For example, reminding myself to "Breathe", "Relax" and "Focus on my reading" had immediate positive results.

Often, we go through life stating what we DON'T want instead of what we DO want. People claim "I can't sleep" and then are surprised with they lie awake night after night. Children tell me "I'm a loser" and then quote examples that they think will prove this to me (and themselves).

Our brains are like a very complex and obedient computer. Whatever we ask for - we get. If you type a word into a computer you will access numerous websites that provide information about and techniques for obtaining the requested item. For example, if you type "firefighting" you will learn about equipment, skills, organizations and heroes in this field. In the same manner, when you speak specific words, your brain gives you everything you need about the subject.

A golfer who repeatedly talks about his "slice" has difficulties overcoming it. Couples who state "We never have enough money" see this situation fulfilled for months or years.

On the other hand, individuals who state "Life is good" can cite examples of their good experiences.

When I have someone in my office who tells me "I dislike Medicine Hat. It is crowded, expensive and people are not friendly" I reply with "You're right". On the same day I might hear someone else tell me "I love Medicine Hat. It is just the right size, affordable and the people are so friendly" I reply with "You're right".

You see, what you say is very powerful for it helps to create the situation in which you find yourself.

Spend a day "listening" to your self-talk and see if you can discover the connection between your words and experiences. You'll be glad you did!