

## Unhealthy Self-Talk

Self-talk affects our mood and perception of ourselves. Rewriting negative self-talk scripts can be a helpful healing exercise for those dealing with symptoms of depression and sadness, particularly issues related to poor self-esteem and loss of hope.

### Circle the items that describe your negative self-talk.

1. I must be accepted and liked at all times.
2. I must never show weakness.
3. I should know, understand and anticipate everything.
4. I must never show feelings or emotions.
5. I must be perfect; I cannot make mistakes.
6. I am responsible for the happiness of others.
7. I must always be in control.
8. I don't deserve to be happy.
9. Other people cannot be trusted.
10. My value as a person depends on what others think of me.
11. If people really knew me, they wouldn't like me.
12. If someone disagrees with me, it means he or she doesn't like me.
13. I must always please others or they won't like me.
14. I am nothing without a relationship.
15. I must succeed at everything I try.
16. I'm unlovable.
17. I should always be happy.
18. I should be able to solve every problem.
19. I am a failure at everything I do.
20. It's not OK to be angry.
21. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Examine the source of your self-talk and rewrite the negative script.

Our self-talk develops from our life experiences and the verbal and nonverbal messages we receive from others. Look closely at each of the items you circled. Where did your negative self-talk come from?

In the left column of the table below, list the negative messages you give yourself. In the middle column, describe in detail the situations and persons who were the original sources of the mes-

sage. In the column on the right, detail a plan based on facts for changing each negative message to a positive one. An example is done for you.

### Self-Talk Chart

Negative Self-talk	Original Source of Self-talk	The Facts	Plan for Rewrite
<p>I cannot make mistakes. I must be perfect.</p>	<p>Extremely critical mother who became very upset whenever I made a mistake.</p>	<p>My mother had un-realistic expectations that were impossible to meet.            I will always made mistakes. No one is perfect.            It is OK to be imperfect because I learn through my mistakes. The greatest successes often come through failure.</p>	<p>I will give myself permission to fail. Each time I make a mistake, I will frame it as an opportunity for learning and growth rather than a disaster.            I will tell myself:            "You are a capable person who makes mistakes. Mistakes help you know what to change in order to accomplish your goals"            I will focus on erasing my mother's voice and negative message with my own positive re-write.</p>

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