

## Enhancing Self-Esteem by Counteracting

### Negative Self-Talk

Without your awareness, you may be making negative things about it to yourself. If you have been in relationships that were not supportive (with parents, friends, or partners), this explains why that you have a low sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Negative thoughts often lead to negative feelings, such as anxiety, self-doubt. You have the power to counteract those feelings by changing what you say to yourself. The first step is becoming aware of your own conversations. Be sure not to give negative statements without positive alternatives when self-talking.

Now, prepare to challenge the self-statements, with positive, realistic alternatives:

**Negative Statement:** "I am always late on 'get' dates, and so are my other relationships."

**Positive Alternative:** "Maybe I'm just forgetful, but I will make a list of the dates and I'll make sure I'm on time. The occasional time I'm late is not a big deal."

**Negative Statement:** "My life is boring because I don't have a lot of friends. I'm too late to change that."

**Positive Alternative:** "It's OK to start making a list of things I can do to meet new people. I can start by joining a club or taking a class. I can start by saying 'hello' and making the conversation."

**Exercise 1:** Think of negative statements you have made about yourself and generate positive, realistic alternatives. Practice "catching yourself" when you are making negative self-statements, and give yourself a positive statement instead. Think about what you would say to encourage a good friend, and say it to yourself.

**Negative Statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Positive Alternative:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Negative Statement:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Positive Alternative:** \_\_\_\_\_