

# Module 15: Self-Talk

## Objectives

This module aims to help you explore and gain understanding of:

- Self-talk
- Positive and negative Self-Talk (thinking)
- How to change negative Self-Talk in to positive Self-Talk'



What you say to yourself in your mind is called self-talk. It can have a really great impact on your self-esteem and confidence. How you talk to yourself in your mind affects:

- your attitude
- your feelings
- your self-image
- your behaviour
- your view of the world

We can talk to ourselves in negative and positive ways

## Starting Point

Identify your current level of knowledge and understanding around your use of self-talk (1 = very little understanding; 2 = some understanding; 3 = secure understanding).

I have a clear understanding of the self-talk messages I give myself.	1	2	3
I can see how my self-talk gives me permission to access sexual images of children.	1	2	3
I understand how to start changing my self-talk.	1	2	3

If you have scored yourself as 1 or 2, then this module will be particularly helpful for you.

## Negative self-talk

There are two kinds of negative self-talk; the kind that justifies inappropriate or unhealthy behaviour and the type that makes you feel useless or small.

Examples of self-talk that justify inappropriate or unhealthy behaviour:



Examples of self-talk statements that make you feel useless or small include:

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Negative self-talk =

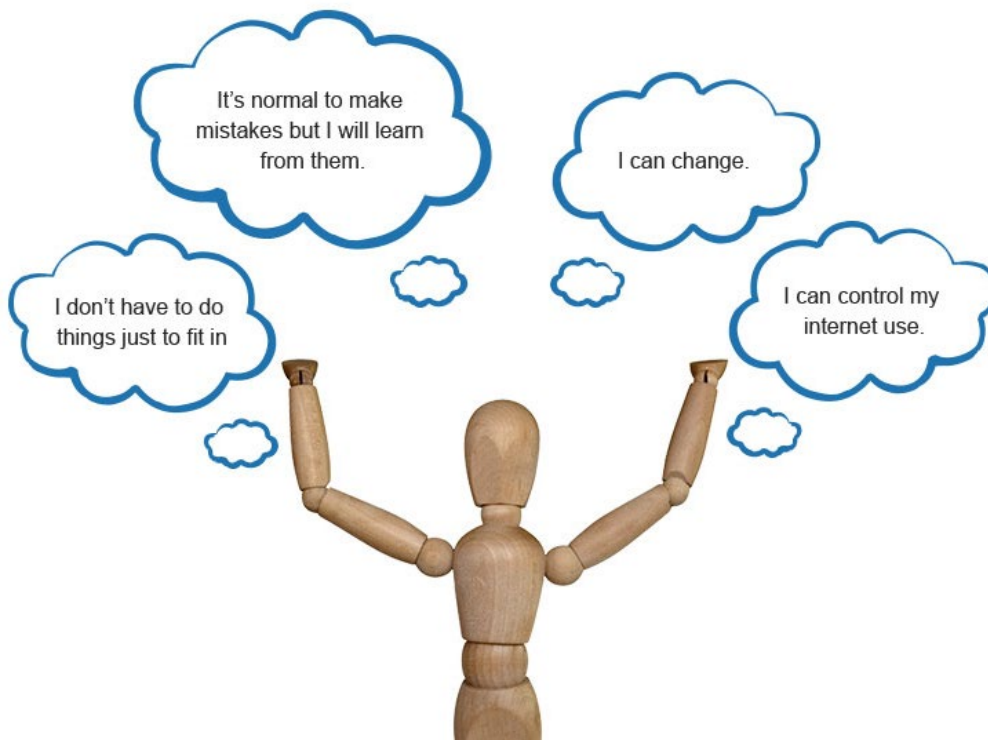
- negative attitude
- negative feelings
- negative self-image
- negative behaviour
- a negative view of the world

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## Positive self-talk

There are two kinds of positive self-talk- the kind that encourages healthy behaviour and the kind that enhances your self-esteem.

Examples of self-talk that encourage healthy behaviour:



Examples of self-talk that enhances your self-esteem:



Positive self-talk =

- positive attitude
- positive feelings
- positive self-image
- positive behaviour
- a positive view of the world

**Positive self-talk will help you to make positive changes in your life.**

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## Changing negative to positive self-talk

You need to be aware of the nature of your self-talk and be determined to shift any negative thinking to positive. This is not always easy as even though you will have a number of positive qualities you may struggle to recognise them and find it hard to give yourself credit for them.

Keep a diary for a week of any negative things you say to yourself.

After a week look back and see what sort of messages you give yourself.

Would you say these things to a friend? We are often harder on ourselves than others. It's time to be your new best friend and be kind to yourself.

You need to start changing negative statements.

You should now be aware that negative thinking can lead to low mood, loss of motivation and that it contributes to negative unhealthy behaviour - including in some cases offending.

Here are some methods which can help you to tackle your negative thinking:

- 1. Challenge your thinking.** For each negative statement ask yourself these questions:
    - What evidence do I have for this belief?
    - What other explanations are there?
    - How likely is this to be the case?
    - If it concerned someone else what would I think?
  - 2. Do something that will distract you from negative thoughts and feelings.** This might be an activity or contacting a friend.
  - 3. Positive reframing.** Try to find a positive aspect to the situation to focus on, rather than the negative. This is something we often do after a bereavement for example, remembering the positive life someone had rather than the loss.
  - 4. Use positive language.** If you constantly say "I can't" you will convince yourself that it's true. Replace negative words with positive ones.
  - 5. Reflect on what has contributed to the negative thoughts and feelings.** Positive thinking is not about denying that anything is or can go wrong. If something goes wrong then take the time to consider what went wrong in order to avoid future mistakes and look forward more positively.
  - 6. Don't be too hard on yourself.** It takes time, practice and determination to change negative thinking and adopt a more optimistic approach.
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## Planning to be positive

If you know you have to deal with a potentially difficult situation identify and rehearse some positive self-talk statements that you can employ before during and after the situation.

For example going on a first date:



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This planning can be used in any situation. Think of something you are doing this week that you are worried or nervous about and think of three positive self-talk statements you can say to yourself to help prepare yourself positively.

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### How does this apply to looking at sexual images of children?

This model is used to explain the internal argument or self-talk someone uses to give themselves permission to access sexual images of children. By increasing your awareness of this process and the negative effects of offending for yourself and others, you increase your ability and motivation to avoid offending.



**Please consider the following questions:**

How has your self-talk allowed you to offend?

What will your future self-talk be?

## Module 15: Self-Talk

### Reflection

As with the Introduction to this module, identify your level of knowledge and understanding around the following aspects of how you use illegal images (1 = very little understanding; 2 = some understanding; 3 = secure understanding).

I have a clear understanding of the self-talk messages I give myself.	1	2	3
I can see how my self-talk gives me permission to access sexual images of children.	1	2	3
I understand how to start changing my self-talk.	1	2	3

Now, consider the following questions:

- Have any of your responses changed from 1 to 2 or 2 to 3 from the start of this module?
- Which part of the module has had the greatest impact on your understanding? Why?
- Has anything from this module prompted or encouraged you to take action around your thinking? If so, what? Has this module raised any further questions for you or made you want to explore any ideas further? What steps do you plan to take to seek out this information?

If you want to discuss anything covered in this module, have struggled with working through the self-help material or just want the opportunity to work through the self-help site with a practitioner to guide you then please [call the Stop It Now! Helpline](#) for confidential support from our trained staff.













