



# Self-Coaching for Happiness and Success

## Notice Your Inner Dialogue

If you are like most people, there is a conversation going on inside your head almost all the time – a kind of self-talk. Even when it may seem quiet outside, there is a lot going on inside. It is important to tune in to this dialogue. You are not “hearing voices” (i.e., hallucinating), but you are talking to yourself – you may not be aware that you are, but you are.

Sometimes the voice in your head might sound like your best friend; at other times, it may feel like your worst enemy. It’s almost as if you have different characters riding along with you throughout the day, weighing in at various times to tell you how you are doing.

It takes practice and perseverance to notice which character is speaking at which time. The goal is to strengthen the voice that will urge you on to success and tune out the one that wants to convince you that failure is on the horizon.

## Inspiring Coach or Harsh Critic?



### The Inspiring Coach

- Gives you credit for doing your best
- Tells you that you are capable
- Is willing to give you a chance
- Is willing to have realistic expectations
- Celebrates your progress and helps you see successes



### The Harsh Critic

- Puts you down and criticizes you
- Wants to blame you rather than looking fairly at the situation
- Labels you as "no good" or as a "loser"
- Holds unreasonable expectations
- Magnifies your mistakes and calls them failures

## Take Control of Your “Playlist”

Have you ever downloaded music onto your computer or phone to create a customized playlist? If you have, you are collecting songs that will create a particular sort of listening experience. Playlists can evolve and change – you might delete songs that you no longer want to hear in favor of adding songs that meet your current tastes.

You might think of self-talk in the same way: you have the power to delete quotes from the Harsh Critic in favor of saying quotes from the Inspiring Coach to create a “positive playlist.”

## Replace Negative Self-Talk with Positive Self-Talk

When you become aware of negative self-talk, try to challenge it and replace it with something more positive and fair. Keep practicing until it becomes a habit and you start to feel more confident.

“I am stupid.”	...becomes...	“I just made a mistake. Everyone makes mistakes sometimes. This is not a reflection of my intelligence or value as a person.”
“Everyone hates me.”	...becomes...	“I have some good friends. You can’t please everyone.”
“I will never find a job.”	...becomes...	“I have been employed before. I just haven’t found the right job to fit my skills and talents yet.”
“I always screw up.”	...becomes...	“I do many things well. I’ll try again and maybe try a different approach.”
“This always happens to me.”	...becomes...	“I bet this happens to other people too. I just don’t know about it.”

### Use Positive Statements Daily

Examples:

“I can do this!”  
“Let it go.”  
“Stay calm.”

### Remind Yourself of Previous Successes

“I have gotten through situations like this many times before.”  
“I have survived other relationship break-ups; I’ll recover from this one.”  
“This panicky feeling will pass; it always does.”

- Remember that you can control only your own actions; you can’t control anyone else.
- Remember that each present moment is an opportunity to gently turn a negative habit of putting yourself down into a positive habit of coaching yourself forward.



### Psychological and Counseling Services (PACS)

3 Garrison Avenue, Smith Hall - 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Durham, NH 03824

Tel: 603-862-2090 Website: [www.unh.edu/pacs](http://www.unh.edu/pacs)